THE BAREFOOT PREACHER

Autobiography of

Abraham Snethen

The Barefoot Preacher

Collected and Compiled by

MRS. N. E. LAMB

Corrected and Revised by

J. F. BURNETT

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PREFACE

This volume contains the autobiography of Abraham Snethen, a man and a minister of rare personality, whose services to religion in its liberal and unsectarian forms, were large and successful; and in the Religious Body to which he belonged, he was known, loved, and followed.

But few who knew Abraham Snethen are now living, but I believe that the story of his life, told in his own plain words and simple fashion, will be read with pleasure and profit by those into whose hands this book may fall. Aged men will relish the revival of scenes with which in a measure they were once familiar, and the younger will be taught encouragement, devotion and truth, and warned by the voice of a man who knew how to suffer and yet succeed.

Elder Snethen was not a writer, but was in the truest sense a public speaker; his striking individuality and rare common sense, made him effective before all audiences, and a tower of strength among men. His personal presence, his logical arguments, his clear-cut reasoning, his quick wit, his native drollery, together with his tender sympathies and good heartedness, easily gave him first place among those with whom he served. A distinguished mem-

ber of the Ohio State Senate, once told the writer, that he had never listened to a public speaker, who could for so long a time, hold the unbroken attention of an audience, as could the "Barefoot preacher."

He left only imperfect notes of his life and labors, from which his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Rev. N. E. (Snethen) Lamb, prepared a manuscript, which I have revised and corrected, to the best of my ability.

Mistress N. E. Lamb says, that when her husband, Rev. William Snethen, died, he left to her the work of preparing the manuscript of his father for publication, and that three times after she had finished the work, she believed she had completed the arrangement for its publication, only to be disappointed.

For myself, I wish to say, that the work of revising and correcting the written story of Elder Snethen's life, has been a very great delight, and while the book goes to the public in no sense free from defects, it is yet sent forth with the hope that it may stimulate its readers to more diligence in their labors, and be fruitful of love, purity and sincerity in their lives. I am sure that I have been made better and stronger for the time and labor given to the rewriting of the story originally prepared by this sun-browned, weather-beaten scout of the Lord's hosts, and I pray that the same good influence may be exerted upon the minds of those who may read these pages.

J. F. BURNETT.

Dayton, Ohio, June 10, 1909.

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INTRODUCTION.

BY J. F. BURNETT.

Abraham Snethen, belonged to a generation of heroes, and represents a type of life, which includes the best of our race. The pioneer life of his generation, doomed the preacher of righteousness, with all others, to unvarying hardships. But few, if any, were born or nurtured beyond the circle of absolute penury, their coarse scanty food and clothes, telling a pathetic story of common privation. And yet these very hardships and privations, developed some of the noblest and loftiest characters of American history. The barefoot boy in the western wilderness, wielding the ax, following the game, or camping on the trail of the Indian, and later becoming the trusted citizen, the able jurist, the eloquent preacher, the princely merchant, and even the occupant of the White House, reveals the result of the discipline of hardship and suffering. The men of Elder Snethen's day, lived in the wilderness, and were nature's noblemen. They subdued the land, and made the dwelling, and the harvest, a possibility; they filled the forest with song, and caused the desert to blossom as the rose. They built their houses of logs, and fed their children on

the fruit of their rifles. They came to the unsettled parts of the United States in obedience to an instinct well nigh equivalent to a heavenly command, to subdue the land and to replenish it. With stalwart strength, intrepid hearts, high resolves, and unconquerable wills, they came to dispossess the redskins, and claim this land as a heritage for civilization. With unconscious prescience, they came to win from battle, self-denial, and toil, estates for their families, and an empire for coming generations. They came for individual freedom and the liberty of conscience, but they well understood, that freedom for the individual, and liberty for the conscience, could not be attained, save by social and civil institutions, and they governed themselves accordingly. They required unfaltering obedience to severe, yet majestic law, for in the absence of this, they knew liberty would degenerate into license, and then all for which they labored and prayed, would come to naught. They concluded trials quickly, and often the criminal was before Judge Lynch, and a jury of regulators, and was treated either to "hot lead" or the "cold end" of a rope, in order that the majesty of the law might be maintained. They held it as the duty of every man to work, and there was one unbending law, inflexible, and ever executed, which was, that no man should be tolerated in any settlement, who did not have a visible and honest

means of support, and woe betide the hapless wretch, who tried to live off the credulity of the hunter of bear, and the trapper of coon.

Prominent among the hardy adventurers of those early days, were the preachers, who had many trials in common with their fellow-men, but who were in many respects quite different from them. As a rule they were physically of large build, robust strength, and keen eye; they were inured to hardships, to exposure and privations they had nerves that never thrilled with fear. Sun and storm bronzed them, hunger and loneliness were their daily companions. Gaunt poverty kept even pace with them in their journeys and continued with them to the end of the last mile they traveled.

While a resident of a western city, I attended the funeral services of a pioneer Methodist minister. He was a very large man, and the ministers chosen for pall-bearers, were all old men. There were eight of them, not one of whom was not above six feet in height, and weighing above two hundred pounds. They were all strong men, and showed that they had been men of great physical strength. During the afternoon of the day of the funeral services, I chanced to meet the minister who had officiated and called his attention to the eight strong, muscular men, who had sat on the platform with him during the morning, and said to him, it was

an unusual sight to me. He was a man of wide experience and deep thought, as well as careful training, and he replied that in the days of their ministry, it was necessary to have physically strong men, as well as to have them otherwise prepared, and that God in calling men for work in the wilderness, called men able to cope with any situation or condition, that might arise.

In those days when a man felt himself called of God to preach the gospel, he went straight at it. He conferred not with flesh and blood but straightway preached the gospel. Instead of hunting up a college, or theological seminary, he hunted up a horse, if one could be found, a pair of "saddlebags," a hymn book, and a Bible, and without money or change of raiment, he went forth to proclaim the truth, as he understood it. His theme was salvation from sin, and his text was "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Thus equipped, he went forth through hail, snow, storm, wind, and rain; he climbed the hills, crossed the mountains, traversed the valleys, plunged through swamps, swam swollen streams, slept out doors nights; wet, weary, hungry, yet ever triumphant. He would hold his horse by the bridle all night, or tether him out, near where he slept, and with his saddle, or saddle-bags for a pillow, and his great coat—if he was fortunate enough to have one—for

a covering, he would sleep as peacefully as the prince in his chamber. He often slept in dirty cabins, on earthen floors, before the fire; ate roasting ears for bread, drank sage tea for beverage, and had bear or deer, or wild turkey, for meat, morning, noon and night, if he could get it. This was the old fashioned preacher's fare and fortune, all the year round. But what cared they? They were living in obedience to Him who said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," and in imitation of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost. They were out to do the work of an evangelist, to make full proof of their ministry; warning "every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, that they might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

Through the instrumentality of these men,—humble though they were,—cabins were erected in every settlement, which served as school-house, and sanctuary, symbol of the strength and purity of the country. Uneducated themselves, they were, nevertheless, the first patrons of literature and science, and the first to build school-houses, and endow colleges. It was not uncommon for men of their class, who could not construct a single sentence according to the rules of the grammar, to give one-half their yearly income for the purpose of establishing an institution of learning. I record it as

my deliberate opinion, that it is a gross injustice, and a malicious slander, to report that these old scouts of God, did not believe in an educated ministry. They did, and sought for themselves the best education attainable, else Elder Abraham Snethen, had never learned to read. They had the wilderness for a college; their theological seminary was their preaching territory; and good and wholesome men their instructors in pastoral theology. Their text book was the Bible; they were men of one Book; having little of the theory and system of theology, they were free to take lessons in the larger school of life, and practical observation. Their commentaries and works of exegesis, were their own hearts, and the hearts of their fellow-men, which they devoutly and prayerfully studied. They were workmen that needed not to be ashamed for they rightly divided the word of truth.

As they traveled the trackless maze of the woods, it was not uncommon for them to be greeted by the crack of a rifle, and the whiz of a bullet, fired from the hiding place of a lurking Indian. As they would sit to rest with the bare, bleak mountains about them, and the leafless trees towering above them, not infrequently did they hear a rustling in the dry branches above them, a low warning *"whist"* from some one near, followed by the quick, sharp crack of a rifle, and crashing through the branches of the

tree, there would fall upon the ground at their feet, a huge panther, writhing in death. The beast had crouched for the final spring, just as the hunter saw him, and his quick shot saved the life of the pioneer preacher. I have read of a preacher in the wilderness, who while seated at the puncheon dinner table, one day, eating with the hunter's family, was startled by a wild scream from the door yard. Rushing out they beheld a great wild cat bearing off the baby of the family. Seizing the rifle from the peg over the door, the preacher raised it to his shoulder, cast a hurried glance along the barrel, and pulled the trigger. The aim was unerring, but too late, the child was dead; already destroyed by the dreadful beast. That same year, that same preacher, had a hand-to-hand fight with a bear from which conflict he came forth a victor, his knife entering the vitals of the animal just as it was about to enfold him in the fatal hug. And that same preacher, during that same year slept in hollow logs, with the wolves howling about him, and none but God to protect.

Joseph Thomas—The White Pilgrim, says of one of his journeys: "I came on to Spruce Run, where night met me. She with sable mantle, wrapped the high raised mountain's top in lonesome darkness, and whelmed the lowly sunken dell into which I was descending, in thicker gloom. In this solitary

wild, hungry, wet and faint, I called in at a cabin, and tarried during the night. But alas! I found nothing to satisfy my hunger, but cucumbers without salt." As I have seen in a vision this man of the wilderness clad in white, riding up to the mountain cabin, I have also seen in vision the cabin into which he went. It was built of logs, notched at the ends to keep them in place; it was twelve by fourteen feet in the clear, and one story high. The spaces between the logs were chinked, and daubed with flat rocks and mud. The interior consisted of one room, one end of which was nearly all taken up by a fire-place. In this one room, the man, his wife and his large family of children were to sleep, and as the woods were full of "varmints," hens and chickens must also be brought in for safe keeping during the night, and as the dogs constituted an important portion of every hunter's family, they also were taken in with the rest.

In this one room the family were to live, eat, sleep, wash, entertain company—if they have any—and do every other thing which enters into the manifold duties of housekeeping. Possibly there may be another apartment to this cabin, if so it is the loft. One gains access to this unused place, by a rickety ladder fixed in one corner of the cabin and if not there, by the same means erected on the outside and leading up to an opening in the end

of the cabin opposite to the chimney. This loft was formed by laying loose clapboards on the cross pieces, called in the language of that day "jice" (joist). One must be careful in crossing the floor of loose boards, or he would trip and fetch up on the sleepers below. The bed was made of dry leaves, covered with a bear skin, or a tick filled with corn shucks. Through the opening in the boards above, the preacher might see the stars, and oftentimes might be kept awake by the howling, prowling wolves, trying to find food for their empty stomachs.

But whether there is such a room in which the preacher may sleep or not, before retiring, he has prayer with the family at which time he reads from his Bible, and sings, out of *his* hymn-book. And if there be no objection, and if it be winter, he lights a pine knot, sticks it up in one corner of the huge fire-place, lays himself flat down before the fire, and reads his Bible, and ponders well and long, as to the things he has in hand, and the message he is to deliver. These old-time preachers, had rules for the government of their lives, which were seldom violated. Whether they slept in the cabin, or on the moss at the root of the tree, at four- o'clock of the morning, they were astir. They first knelt and prayed; a simple, fervent prayer. They next looked after their faithful horse, loved as a companion, and as tenderly cared for as a child. As soon as it is

light enough for them to see to read, the Bible is opened, and chapter after chapter, is read, oftentimes with the reader on his knees, and tears running down his cheeks. After a breakfast, if they could get one, they mounted their horse, and hymn-book in hand rode away, singing as they often did, with such heartiness as to wake the echoes of the forest. In their trackless journeys, they guided themselves by the sun, the course of the streams, the different shades and textures of the bark on the trees, or by any other means that might indicate to them, the course they were traveling. They were faithful to their obligation, and never was lover more true to his tryst, than were those old men, to their appointments. They held meeting on every day of the week, and the day and hour were not more sure to arrive, than were they, and no matter whether the congregation was large or small, the same fervor and zeal characterized the preaching. They went everywhere, preaching the gospel. They were veritable John Baptists, blazing the way through the wilderness for the coming of the King. They were missionaries in the truest sense of the word, and those who have come after them, would do well to be more like them. Over their dead countrymen, whether he fell in the bloody field of Indian battle, or was torn to pieces by a wild

animal, or fell asleep in death in his own country cabin, they performed the rites of Christian burial.

These early preachers, had no time for eulogies. A few hurried words, an earnest prayer, a handful of dirt, and the bugle called to battle. The man who died was at rest, the men that lived had the more to do. To the lonely cabin where dwelt the broken-hearted widow, with her helpless orphans, they hastened, and brought to her the comforting teachings of Jesus Christ. The drunkard was counselled, the swearer reproved, all forms of vice denounced, and all men warned to flee the wrath to come. No occasion was omitted, no opportunity lost. The man they meet to-day may be dead to-morrow, and with a burning desire that he might be saved, the preacher exhorted him to turn from his evil ways, and be reconciled to God. They did not think of their sermons, nor of their notes, but of the dying men and women to whom they preached, and therein was the secret of their success. Their preaching was sometimes dogmatic, and polemic, and always lacked the polish of the sermonic finish; but even then it was spiced with pungent, practical expostulations. They used the words of daily life. What they meant for any one man, he was sure to get. They were not metaphysical, rhetorical, logical, oratorical, nor entertaining, but they spoke to the point; they kept track of their hearers; they may

have left the beaten track, but they brought down their game. They lived and preached in the woods, and to men who could "pick out" a squirrel's eye at a hundred yards, or drive a nail into a tree, with a bullet at a distance of seventy-five; they preached to a people who despised ambiguity, circumlocutions, and other forms of indefinite speech. They never began to preach, until they had something to say, then they said it, and quit.

The following incident told by William Henry Wilburn of Hugh L. White, a distinguished Judge in Tennessee, and a pioneer preacher will illustrate the directness, spirit and temper, of the men of that day so long gone by.

"It was noised through the town of Jonesborough, that Mr. Axley would hold forth on the morning of the ensuing Sabbath. The famous divine was a great favorite—with none more than with Judge White. At the appointed hour, the Judge, in company with a large congregation, was in attendance at the house of prayer. All were hushed in expectation. Mr. Axley entered, but with him a clerical brother, who was 'put up' to preach. The congregation was composed of the border population; they were disappointed; this was not the man they had come to hear, consequently there was a good deal of misbehavior. The discourse was ended, and Mr. Axley arose. It is a custom in a new country, when

two or more preachers are present, for each of them to have something to say. The people opine that it is a great waste of time, to come a long distance and be put off with a short service. I have gone into church at eight o'clock in the morning, and have not come out again until five o'clock in the afternoon. Short administrations are the growth of thicker settlements. Mr. Axley stood silently surveying the congregation until every eye was riveted. He then began: "It may be a very painful duty, but it is a very solemn one, for a minister of the gospel to reprove vice, misconduct, and sin, whenever and wherever he sees it. But especially is this his duty on Sunday and at church. That is a duty I am now about to attend to. And now,' continued the Rev. Speaker, pointing with his long finger in the direction indicated; 'that man sitting out yonder behind the door, who got up and went out while the brother was preaching, stayed out as long as he wanted to, got his boots full of mud, came back and stamped the mud off at the door, making all the noise he could on purpose to disturb the congregation, and then took his seat; that man thinks I mean him. It doesn't look as if he had been raised in the white settlements, does it, to behave that way at meeting? Now, my friend, I would advise you to learn better manners before

you come to church next time; but I don't mean him.

"'And now,' again pointing at his mark, 'that little girl sitting there, about half way of the house,—I should judge her to be about sixteen years old—that's her with the artificial flowers on the outside of her bonnet and the inside of her bonnet, she has a breast-pin on too, (they were very severe upon all superfluities of dress) she that was giggling and chatting all the time the brother was preaching, so that even the old sisters in the neighborhood couldn't hear what he said, though they tried to. She thinks I mean her. I am sorry from the bottom of my heart, for any parents that have raised a girl to her time of day, and haven't taught her how to behave when she comes to church. Little girl, you have disgraced your parents, as well as yourself. Behave better next time, won't you? But I don't mean her.' Directing his finger to another aim, he said, 'that man sitting there, that looks so bright and pert as if he was never asleep in his life, and never expected to be, but just as soon as the brother took his text, laid his head down on the back of the seat in front of him and went sound asleep; slept the whole time and snored; that man thinks I mean him. My friend, don't you know the church is not the place to sleep? If you needed rest, why didn't you stay at home, take off your clothes, and

go to bed? That's the place to sleep, not at church. The next time you have a chance to hear a sermon I advise you to keep awake. But I don't mean him.' Thus did he proceed, pointing out every man, woman and child, who had in the slightest, deviated from a befitting line of conduct; characterizing the misdemeanor and reading sharp lessons of rebuke. Judge White was all this time sitting at the end of the front seat, just under the speaker, enjoying the old gentleman's disquisition to the last degree; twisting his neck around to note if the audience relished the 'downcomings' as much as he did; rubbing his hands, smiling, chuckling inwardly. Between his teeth and cheeks was a monstrous quid of tobacco, which the better he was pleased the more he chewed, the more he chewed the more he spat, and behold the floor bore witness to the results. At length the old gentleman, straightened himself up to his full height, continued, with great gravity: Now I reckon you want to know who I do mean? I mean that dirty, nasty, filthy tobacco chewer, sitting on the end of that front seat'—his finger mean while pointing true as the needle to the pole—'see what he has been about! look at those puddles on the floor; a frog wouldn't get into them; think of the tails of the sisters' dresses, being dragged through that muck.' The crest-fallen judge, avers that he never chewed any more tobacco in church."

They were men not only of courage, but of faith. They believed, and that too without question. They trusted God with a confidence that puts to shame the faith that falters, or a trust that doubts.

I have heard the following story, and in my early life heard it told of "The White Pilgrim," but I find nothing in his life to suggest that it was he. I have also heard it told of the redoubtable Peter Cartwright, but do not know whether it was he or not. One thing I do know, and that is that it illustrates the faith of the pioneer preacher.

A wayfarer preacher who for many years had preached in the Northwestern territory, after its division into states, found his operations circumscribed to Indiana. Himself and wife had subsisted upon the scanty pittance given them—barely enough to keep soul and body together. They had borne their poverty and toil without a murmur. The preacher was much beloved by all who knew him; tall, slender, graceful, with a winning countenance, a kindly eye, from which flashed the fire of genius, a silvery voice, and a power in speech all combining to make him loved by his friends and feared by his enemies. As the country began to settle up, a large land owner much attached to the preacher, knowing his poverty and wishing to help him, made him a present of a half-section of land. The man of God, accepts the deed, and goes on his way rejoicing,

though with a humble heart, and deeply conscious of his unworthiness. He now felt that he had enough for himself and family, and as age was creeping upon him, he felt that soon he would need it. In three months from the time, he returns, alighting at the gate he removes the saddle-bags, and begins to fumble in their pockets. As he reaches the door where stands his friendly host to welcome him, he draws out the parchment, saying—

"Here, sir, I want to give back your title deed."

"What's the matter?" said his friend, greatly surprised; "any flaw in it?"

"No."

"Isn't it good land?"

"Good as any in the state?"

"Sickly situation?"

"Healthy as any other."

"Do you think I repent my gift?"

"I haven't the slightest reason to doubt your generosity."

"Why don't you keep it then?"

"Well sir," said the preacher, "You know I am very fond of singing, and there is one hymn in my book, the singing of which is one of the greatest comforts of my life. I have not been able to sing it with my whole heart, since I was here. A part of it runs this way"—and he sang in a clear but tremulous voice.

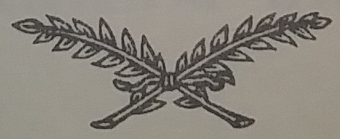
"No foot of land do I possess,
  No cottage in the wilderness;
A poor wayfaring man,
  I lodge awhile in tents below,
And gladly wander to and fro,
  Till I my Canaan gain:
There is my house and portion fair,
  My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home."

"Take your title deed," he added, "I had rather sing that hymn with a clear conscience than own America."

Yes, they were heroes, sun-browned, weather-beaten, scouts of an army that has not yet arrived. It is related, that at one of the early Methodist conferences at which Bishop Asbury presided, he told the following incident, just before he read the appointments, and made the following statement:

"When the British Admiralty," he said, "wanted some man to take Quebec, they began with the oldest general first, asking him: 'General, will you go and take Quebec?' To which he made reply, 'It is a very difficult enterprise.' 'You may stand aside,' they said. One after another the generals answered they would, in some more or less indefinite manner, until the youngest man on the list was reached. 'General Wolfe,' they said, 'will you go and take Quebec?' 'I'll do it or die,' he replied. Here the bishop

paused, looked round about them and added, with a voice full of emotion, 'He went, and did both.' We send you first to take the country allotted to you. We want only men who are determined to do it or die. Some of you, dear brethren, will do both." The preachers of these early days of whom Abraham Snethen was one, and whose life story is told in the following pages, "did both."



AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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OF

ABRAHAM SNETHEN

CHAPTER ONE

BOYHOOD DAYS.

I was born in Bourbon County, Kentucky, January 15, 1794. My father was a native of New Jersey, and my mother, whose maiden name was Castro, was born in Virginia. My parents located at Bryant Station, Ky., about the time it was besieged by the Indians. They settled finally, in the mountain part of Bourbon County, on Goose, or Grapevine Creek. Here the land was poor, and the people not only poor, but ignorant, their principal means of support being hunting, and boiling saltpetre, which they obtained from caves and other places, as will be described later on. I was third, in a family of eleven children, five sons and six daughters, and was reared in the wild woods of a state which at that time was undeveloped, and full of superstition, the people with scarcely an exception, believing in signs, witches, ghosts, lucky and unlucky days, and many other kinds of fetichism, together with the characteristic pioneer pride, boasting in personal bravery; so that every community had its "bully" or best man in a fight, second best, and so on down to the lowest grade—the coward who was despised and snubbed by all.

My father was a hunter, and from early life, I was inured to the hardships and deprivations of pioneer life. My father was a brave, bold man, and while he could follow the game in the best hunting grounds of the state, he could with equal valor and ability, pursue the Indian, or defend himself from their attacks. He with John Lawson and Simon Kenton, who were friends of the family, was often necessitated to defend themselves from the attacks of the Indians, or were called upon to follow them in pursuit of their rights.

He was at one time with John Ross and John Lawson, at the Buffalo Licks, where they had gone to watch the buffalo drink the salt water. It was proposed by Lawson, that they should pick out a calf, and that two of them should fire at it at the same time, so that one shot would be reserved, lest there should be Indians there on the same errand who would take advantage of them in case all their guns were empty. My father and Ross did as they were directed, and picking out a fine young calf, they fired at it, when the word "three" was spoken. The calf ran a few rods and fell dead, but the mother in her fright ran down a steep cliff into the thick bog and mired. They all three in the excitement of the moment forgot the probability of Indians being in hiding, and ran down to where the cow had mired, and while watching her struggles,

five Indians rushed out of their hiding, only about twelve rods away, and started directly toward them. My father assured himself that neither Ross nor Lawson was hurt, Lawson having his gun in position, which he immediately discharged, and an Indian fell dead in his tracks. The other four charged on the now helpless men, who had no choice but to run for their lives, for they saw that the Indians were better prepared for a hand-to-hand fight than were they. My father was singled out by a large and swarthy Indian, who started at full speed toward him as he ran down the hill, gaining as he did perceptibly on his pursuer. Following the run down the hill, came a long run up hill, during which the Indian gained on my father, who saw that the race in the end would result in his being overtaken. When they came to the top of the third hill, father threw away his gun, determined that when his pursuer overtook him, to sell his life as dearly as possible, fighting as he had made up his mind to do, with stones. Seeing that the Indian had not gained much on him in the last few minutes, he decided to run down the hill as fast as he could, which he did until he came near the foot of the hill when he suddenly darted out of the path into a laurel thicket, when the Indian passed by so close to his hiding place, that he could hear him breathe. When the Indian had disappeared, father left his hiding place,

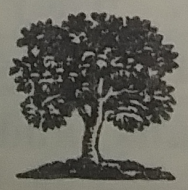
and hurried back over the way he had been running. He had not gone far, when he found himself face to face with two other Indians, who fortunately for father did not see him, so that he had a chance to again conceal himself, and when they too had passed his hiding place, he again came out, and with all possible speed started toward Bryant Station. Coming to the river at a point where the bank was perpendicular but low, and extending out over the water, he found a series of caves, extending back from the water's edge, and here he slid off into the river, and went back into one of the caves to rest, for he was well nigh exhausted from his long and vigorous run. He had not been in the cave but a few moments, when he heard some one jump from the bank into the water, as he himself had done. Thinking that it must be an Indian, he secured some stones, and made ready for as good a defense as he was capable of making, under the circumstances. As a death-like stillness followed the splash in the water, he thought that it might be one of his companions, and to test his judgment, he sailed a flat rock over the surface of the water, which was answered by the same sign, by which he knew, that it was a white man, but was not sure whether friend or foe, but soon to his great delight he saw the form of John Ross floating on the water. They immediately set out for the station, where, when

they arrived, they found Lawson eating his dinner with a contentment that was characteristic of the brave, yet good-hearted frontiersman. Of course, he laughed at them, and made inquiry about their guns, and when told that they had thrown them away the better to be able to run, he laughed again, but told them he had a gun for one of them, and that the other would find his at the salt lick. He then related to them, how that when he shot the Indian at the "lick" two of the others ran toward him, and he started to run, which he did at the top of his speed, and while doing so without slacking his pace in the least, he proceeded to load his gun, in which he did not succeed, until he sprang behind a tree, where he rammed the bullet home, and prepared to shoot, just as one of the Indians who also had taken refuge behind a tree, came into view, dashing as he did from his hiding place toward him. A flash, a report, and the Indian fell to the ground, and his companion ran away. They immediately raised a company of fifteen or twenty men, and started on the trail of the Indians, and coming to where the Indian was standing when Lawson fired at him, they found plenty of blood stains, but the Indian had crawled off. They followed the trail by the blood some distance, when they found the body of the Indian leaning against a fallen tree, with his finger upon the trigger of his rifle, but his spirit

had gone to the "Happy Hunting Ground" of his fathers.

This is but one of the many of like adventures my father had with the Indians during my early life, but this will suffice to reveal some of the conditions of the days of my youth.

My father moved from where I was born up Red river, near where the iron works now are. From there he moved to the Kentucky river. As the game grew more scarce, the more there were to hunt for it, and the oftener father moved, each time going farther up the river, moving until he had moved thirty-four times in thirty-two years.



CHAPTER TWO

OUR FIRST MOVE AND OTHER INCIDENTS AS I REMEMBER THEM.

The first move I remember of father making, was when I was about nine years old. At that time we moved up beside the "Old Landing Mills" and from there, up the river to the forks, and then to the north side of the north fork, between upper and lower "Devil's Creek." These rivers and their tributaries, run through a mountainous region, at times cutting their way through deep gorges, and dark canyons, and are enclosed between perpendicular banks of solid masonry, and overhung in many places with rocky cliffs rising to the height of several hundred feet. We were told that the creek got its name ("Devil's Creek") from the following incident, which made a deep impression upon my youthful mind, though I felt quite sure that some more reasonable explanation could be found for the strange and unusual sounds.

Some men were passing up the river, where the banks rise above the water in solid natural masonry, a full thousand feet. High up in this wall of rock, is a round hole, and as the men were passing this cliff they heard the splash of their oars coming

as distinctly from this hole in the cliff, as it did from the water, and the men declared that they heard a voice clear and distinct speaking from the hole, "What the devil are you doing there?" and a voice from above would answer back, "What the devil are you doing down there?" This was an age of superstition, and ignorance as the above incident and the following one will show.

When I was about fifteen years old my father owned a fine young filly of which he was very proud. This filly was taken sick under such circumstances as to warrant the family in concluding that the animal had been bewitched. As my parents had to go away on the day she was taken sick, I was left in charge of the sick filly, and was strictly commanded under severe penalty, to allow no person to have any fire or water on that day, as the witch herself (generally a woman) might be the one to ask for these and if obtained, the colt would surely die. Shortly after their departure old Mother Cornega, a true and tried friend of the family, and a good woman, came from a long distance on foot, to visit my parents. About the first thing she did upon her arrival was to ask me to light her pipe, and give her a drink of water to quench her thirst; she was given both. The good woman finding my parents absent soon went home, little suspecting the reputation she was gaining. When my parents

returned and found what had been done in their absence, they were assured of who the witch was. The filly died, the warm friendship between Mother Cornega and my parents was blasted for life, and I got a sound whipping for my disobedience.

At this place above mentioned, between upper and lower Devil's Creek, on the north fork, my father built a house on the inside of a cave. It stood about eighty yards from where the top was exposed to the rain. This was the warmest house in which I ever lived, and the time spent there, the happiest period of my life.

Here we had plenty to eat, would keep warm even in the coldest weather, and it seemed to me so far back in the cave, that no harm could come to us. Here amid the rugged mountain scenery, which is always fascinating and inspiring, I had enough to occupy my mind, and employ my hands, for it was while living here, that we began the making of saltpetre. The saltpetre would gather in the dry leaves, under the leaves, in the sand, and under all sorts of litter, such as broken rocks, sticks, and empty nut shells. Sometimes it would be an inch or more in thickness, and when found in the rocks, they would have to be broken, and put into hoppers as one does soap, and the saltpetre bleached out like lye. When it is found in the leaves, or under rubbish, all that is necessary is to bleach it out,

boil it down, until it bubbles like the bubbles forming on boiling soap, when it would be emptied into vats to cool. After it is thoroughly cooled, it is taken out to dry, which it does in a few minutes, when it is ready for market to which place it was sent on pack mules, and for which we usually received twelve and a half cents per pound, but during the war with England in 1812, it reached twenty-five cents per pound, for, from the saltpetre, powder was made, and there being a great demand for powder, the price per pound was increased. Game, such as deer, bear and turkey, were in great abundance in the locality of our new home, from which we were able to always have a good supply of meat for our table. I do not remember that we were ever without meat, while living here. The fur animals were the otter, mink and coon. The beasts of prey were the bear, panther, catamount, mountain cat, fox and large gray wolf, all of which were plentiful, and which did much mischief, and caused the people much trouble. Several times while living here, I came near being devoured by wolves while hunting the cows in the evening time. Upon one occasion as I was following a cow trail, I chanced to glance ahead of me, and in the trail not far from where I stood, sat a bear, busily engaged in raking up the chestnuts about him, and eating them with apparent satisfaction and keen

delight. Suddenly the bear stopped eating and lifting up his nose toward me, he gave evidence that he was aware of my presence. After he had taken a good survey of me, from head to foot, he started towards me. My first impulse was to climb a tree, and taking hold of a sapling that stood near me, I made an effort to climb it but found myself destitute of strength. The bear was then within a few feet of me when to my surprise and delight I saw my father's hunting dog coming toward me, his every movement revealing his intention to attack the bear. The faithful dog had scented my track and following me came to my rescue in the nick of time. The bear was ready for the fight, and came ambling toward us, when all of a sudden I found my strength and taking to my heels I ran with all my might, not slacking my pace until I came to the river into which I plunged and tried to swim to the opposite shore, but I found that my exhausted strength was not sufficient for the task. I had sunk twice, when I saw that it was a choice between drowning, and a meal for his bearship unless help was immediate. I had not noticed until this moment that I was near the branches of a tree which extended out over the water, which I immediately seized, and drew myself to the shore where I was compelled to remain for some time, being too weak to stand. After thus

resting awhile, I regained sufficient strength to make my way home. The good old dog did not return until the next day, and he bore many marks of the hard fight he had with bruin.

On another occasion in company with my brother, I crossed the river and went to Squabble Creek. We crossed in the morning at which time the water was low, and we had no difficulty in getting over. There fell that day an unusually heavy rain, and in the evening when we returned we found the river overflowing its banks. Large trees and great logs were carried down upon the raging torrent of water. Drift-wood in large aggregations, was floating down the stream at an alarming rate of speed. How to cross the angry river worried us a great deal. It was impossible to swim across. To stay out doors all night was dangerous, as there were wild beasts roaming the woods, and we were unarmed. No plan we could devise seemed at all feasible. A large slab floated near the shore where we were standing, but it was not large enough for two persons of our weight, and neither one of us would leave the other. We saw some cattle near the bank of the stream, and my brother suggested that we drive them into the river, and for me to grab the tail of one of them, and he would take the slab, and thus both might get over. We drove them in, and I caught a large white steer by the tail as he jumped from the

bank. He was frightened and made a sudden and tremendous leap into the water. He struggled frantically and I held on heroically. My only hope was in clinging to him. The water was splashing in my face, and ringing in my ears, and there was a deafening rush and roar all about me, in the midst of which I yelled at the steer, and my brother kept calling to me "Hold tight Abe! Hold on Abe! Don't you let go! He'll take you across! You'll drown if you let go!" The animal continued to swim, but my weight on his tail, caused him to turn his head up stream, so that he made no headway. We were carried down the stream at a rapid rate on the swiftly rushing waters. I climbed upon the animal's back, and splashed water upon the side of his face. This had the effect of turning him from his course, and he drifted into a thicket of blackberry bushes that was under water, which tore my clothes and scratched my flesh in a serious manner. But I dared not let go, for my present salvation depended upon that steer reaching the shore, and my holding on until he did. At last, thoroughly drenched, exhausted, bleeding, and almost without clothes, I was landed on the side of the stream on which was my father's home and safety.

CHAPTER THREE

A TRIAL OF OUTLAWS AND ITS RESULT.

About this time the locality in which my parents had settled, began filling up with families from all parts of the country. All the valleys, creek, and river bottom lands, at all desirable, were taken up by what was known as Seminary Warrants, or College Script, sometimes called Claims.

There were two settlements about forty miles above our home, one on the Northfork, the other on the Southfork, opposite the saltworks. The people of these settlements drove their cattle over to the Middlefork of the river into the large canebrake, where they found pasturage in great abundance, and that too, of a kind that pleased and fattened the cattle. There was plenty of pasture for all the stock of both settlements, and had not Satan got possession of some of the Southfork settlers, all might have gone well, but as it was, in the days of Abraham and Lot, even so was it here; each settlement coveted the best pasture lands and sought to obtain them. One day some men from the Southfork settlement shot and killed several cattle belonging to their neighbors. Of course this caused trouble. Such a breach of friendship was neither

to go unnoticed or unpunished. It would have been a crime against the honor of the settlement, had it gone unavenged. The men from the Northfork settlement watched for an opportunity to wreak vengeance upon their neighbors, which came one day while the Southfork men were out hunting, when the Northforkers invaded their settlement setting fire to the corn fodder in the shock, and many other things which were consumed ere the hunters returned to the settlement. When they did return and found so many things destroyed by their neighbors, and that they had been outwitted in the matter, they became enraged, and at once formed a company and arranged a plan for going over into the adjoining settlement and putting to death the intruders.

It seems that one man among them, at least was not in favor of so bold and bad a plot, as his friends had laid, and he sought opportunity of informing the men of the other settlement of the plot and plan laid against them, and advised them to prepare to defend themselves, which they proceeded to do.

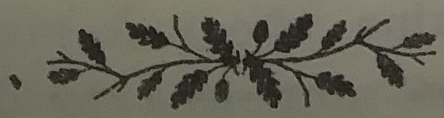
Gathering a company of men and taking their guns they hastened to put their women and children in safe places, and proceeded toward the Middlefork, where they expected to meet their foe. The men from the Southfork reached the river first, and stopped to allow their horses to drink, when the

men from the Northfork availed themselves of the advantage and opened the fight by firing into the ranks of unsuspecting men. One man was shot in the arm, and one in the thigh, and several horses were killed. When this disgraceful affair was known in the old settlements, steps were at once taken to make a county out of the territory and organize a court, which they succeeded in doing, the first session of the court being held in a log cabin on Goose Creek. Here the matter was gone over and efforts made to adjust the losses to both parties.

While the court was in session, the judge and a man by the name of Amy engaged in conversation, during which a man by the name of "Joe" Ekins, of the Northfork crowd, took down a gun that he had previously concealed in the loft of the cabin and fired at Amy, the bullet entering his temple, indeed there were two balls in the gun, both of which entered Amy's temple, about an inch apart, and passing through his head lodged in the skin on the other side. The sheriff being present, he at once arrested Ekins who was given an immediate hearing, and was sentenced to be hung in three weeks from that day. When the time came for him to be executed he was brought out of the rude jail, and to the place at which he was to die. He seemed somewhat nervous and might have weakened

had not his wife, who was present, called to him and said, "'Joe' Ekins die like a man! Not like a dog!" "Have you anything to say?" asked the sheriff, in a kindly yet somewhat stern tone of voice. "I have nothing to say," he replied. A few minutes before he was to be executed the sheriff again said to him, "You have but ten minutes more to live, if you have anything to say, say on."

Ekins arose and standing on his coffin, said in clear, cold tones, "I can say there is one damned rascal out of the way, and soon you can say there is another damned rascal out of the way!" At this he sat down and ten minutes later paid the penalty the law had inflicted and his soul went into eternity. This so impressed me that I have never been a believer in capital punishment.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE EARTHQUAKE OF EIGHTEEN AND ELEVEN.

I can never be sure of dates, for the reason that the people with whom I have been associated, like myself, have been uneducated, so that little importance was ever attached to dates or places, the mere facts of an incident or event being quite sufficient for the uncultivated people of my time and association.

But I do remember, and that too, most vividly, the time and character of the earthquake of the year 1811. A comet had appeared the same year of the earthquake, and had on that night just disappeared when the earthquake came, and the general conclusion was, that the comet caused the earth to shake. Everybody was expecting the final wind-up of all things earthly, supposing that the end of the world had really come. We knew nothing of science, or of philosophy; nothing of the planetary system; had no knowledge whatsoever of the science of astronomy; had never been told the distance the sun, moon and stars were from the earth, and having an idea as we did that they were but a short distance away from our planet, that the comet had

touched the earth, and that in a little from then, the world would come to an end. The earth shook so violently that great rocks were loosened from the mountain side and rolled down with a mighty crash into the valleys below. This added very much to the awful rumbling under ground and really caused fear and trembling to take hold of all the people. So much were the people frightened, that they gathered in groups and huddling together, they silently awaited the coming of the end of all things.

There was one woman among us all, who could read, and she opened her Bible and read the description of the consummation of all things, as recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, laying particular emphasis upon the words:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:" "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

She then turned to Mark, the thirteenth chapter, and read:

"And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there

shall be famines and troubles; these are the beginnings of sorrows."

And again she turned to Luke the twenty-first chapter:

"And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven."

Following this she read from II Peter the third chapter:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Then we listened to the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of Jude, which seemed to fasten the truth and terror of all the preceding verses, so that there was no escaping the truth that the world was rapidly coming to an end. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying: Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

The earthquake was not without its moral effect upon the life of the community, for without excep-

tion the men ceased their profanity and left off many other evil practices, and for a long time following the quaking of the earth, all lived more quiet and upright.

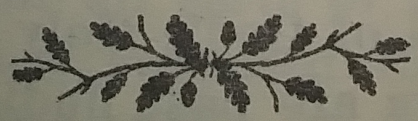
Not long after this my parents removed to the Middle fork of the river, and were soon afterward followed by two other families who settled about eight miles from our home. The three families just named constituted the entire community in that locality at that time. We still continued to hunt and trap, though the game was not as plentiful as in the earlier days of our residence in Kentucky, and we sometimes boiled saltpetre, but this commodity had so depreciated in value that we could get but little profit from the sale of it. After the war had ended, the mountains of Kentucky became the hiding place for all sorts of lawless men, who fleeing from justice, supposed that in the rocky fastnesses of the mountains, their hiding would be beyond discovery, and their secrets remain unknown. They came in such numbers and committed such depredations and crimes, that the country became worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, if that were possible.

We had no schools, no gospel meetings, no moral sentiment to raise against such intrusions, and the worst men with the worst characters, records and dispositions, came in great hordes, until it seemed

that God had given us all over to hardness of heart and reprobacy of mind. I cannot even now look back to those days of crime, bloodshed, and suffering, without a shudder in my frame, and a sorrow in my heart, and as I contemplate the scenes of their awful crimes, I am made to wonder why the judgments of the Almighty, did not fall upon them; but as I remember that He is good, and that His mercy endureth forever, I exclaim it was because of the long suffering and tender compassion of a kind and loving Heavenly Father. "Oh Lord, how mysterious are thy ways, they are past finding out!"

It seems now a great wonder to me, that I took the course I did, seeing the wickedness which surrounded me in my early life, and being compelled as I was, to associate with the corrupt, the base and the impure. It seems a marvel to me, that I ever answered the call of God's Holy Spirit. I exclaim indeed, "His ways are past finding out." But the greatest wonder of all to me, is, that men having been born of the Spirit, and called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, do not beg and beseech men with all their powers, using all their time and talents to induce them to leave off their sinful ways and give themselves to righteousness. It gives me great pain to know that ministers once called of God, stop preaching the truth, and I exclaim, "Why, oh, why is it, that men do not give all their time,

their talents, and their all, to the work of saving souls? Why are men so thoughtless of their best interests, their soul's eternal welfare, as to spend their time and strength in laying up treasures on the earth—for how long, foolish man, will you enjoy them?



CHAPTER FIVE

CONVICTION UPON HEARING MY FIRST SERMON

During the fall of 1811 corn was very scarce in that part of the state in which we lived, and my father sent me to a place on the South fork of the Kentucky river, a distance from home of about forty miles, to husk corn, for which work we were to take corn. While at work here I heard of a Methodist meeting being held a few miles below where I was. I did not know much about meetings, having never yet attended one, for the reason evidently, that none had been held within reach of me. I made up my mind that I would attend, not for any interest I had in the meeting, but because I wanted to fight the grandson of the preacher, whose name was Frederick Bowman. I had previously quarreled with "Ned" Bowman, and we understood that we were to fight it out the first time we met, and knowing that he would be at the meeting, I thought that would be a good time and place for the fight. I got a friend of mine to go with me. When we arrived, the congregation was in waiting, and certainly everybody had come to that meeting. Meetings in those days were something new, and

people attended from curiosity if for no other reason.

Besides my desire to fight "Ned" Bowman, I wanted to go, for as stated above, I had never heard a sermon, or attended a meeting in all my life. We had been there but a short time when the preacher came in and commenced the meeting. It should be stated here that it was "Ned's" grandfather, Cornelius Bowman, who was conducting the service. He read a hymn two lines at a time and led the singing himself. He prayed with the utmost sincerity, but in a voice that shook the cabin windows, and thus gave the simple people present, a deeper reverence for the dreadfulness of his message. He prayed as a man talking face to face with God. He prayed with a certain assurance of being heard, and with a sincere conviction of the endless woe which awaited the unforgiven hearers then and there present. I am now convinced that it is not argument that reaches men, but conviction, and for immediate and practical purposes, one Elijah that can thunder out of a heart that never doubts, is worth a thousand acute writers of ingenious apologies. The preacher was not educated as the schools define education; he did not know Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Latin, but he knew what was of vastly more importance to him—how to read and expound the hearts and lives of the impulsive, reckless people among

whom he lived and labored. He was of their thought and fibre. His text on the occasion was: Rev. 14:6. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Every eye was fixed on the preacher, and a death-like stillness prevailed. The text had secured their attention and riveted their thinking. It had also produced an expressible agitation, as was plainly seen in the faces of the hearers. As I listened, I drank in the force of the sermon. Indeed it got hold of me; it tore me all to pieces; it shook all the fight out of me; I gave up my contention with "Ned" Bowman, and had he come at me then with his fist doubled ready for a blow, I think I should have permitted him to strike me, or I might have turned from him and fled. I am quite sure I should not have tried to fight him. I knew the preacher was telling the truth, and I trembled like an aspen leaf. I felt that we were all going to ruin, and I think now that it was true that we were. I did not sleep that night. The voice of the preacher kept me awake, his sermon kept ringing in my ears, and firing my brain. I felt that I was on the downward road to ruin and death, and that I was going at a mighty pace in the direction of hell. I felt deep down in my heart that if I did not accept the

Christ I could not be saved. But could I be saved? This question was constantly coming up for reply. No matter where I was, what I was doing, or who I was with, that question was ever in my mind. Living as I was in the midst of such wickedness—was this wonderful message for me? Was it not meant for those better than I? For those who had been blessed with better opportunities than I had ever known? For those reared under different influences than I? I found myself asking, over and over again; if that sermon is true and I could not doubt its truth, what will become of the wicked, godless men living up in the mountains? These and kindred reflections kept me awake throughout the night, and sleep could not be induced to come to me. The next morning I started for home. Two rugged and lofty mountains lie in my path, over which I must go to reach my father's cabin. As I stood on the highest of these peaks, I thought I could see all over the world. There was not a sound to be heard, except the low moaning of a light breeze and the chirrup of a few crickets. There was a slight ringing in my ears, caused, I now suppose, from the high altitude I had attained. All this, with the thoughts of the preceding night, and the truth of the sermon, combined to bring upon me a feeling of loneliness, homesickness, dread, a certain fearful longing for something, I knew not what,

except to feel that I was the only living being in all the wide world. In every direction, wherever I would turn my attention, everything seemed hushed and silent. I felt a sinking sensation at my heart, and I was almost overcome with a presence I could not explain. I was accustomed to the solitude. I had never been conscious of fear since I was a mere boy. I had no conscious feeling of danger,—I cried; I wept aloud; I felt that every friend had been taken from me, and that everything near and dear to me had been suddenly and irrevocably swept from me, and that I was in the world alone. No pen can portray my feelings, nor write the intensity of my loneliness. I felt sure I had not a friend in all the world, and oh, the dark, dark cloud, that seemed between me and my God. I thought I would pray, but that seemed useless. I felt myself lost—completely lost, but where could I go? What could I do? Was there salvation for me? I finally came to this conclusion; I would live a better life, and I kept that resolution, and did live a better life. I had been a fighter, though small of stature, an expert dancer, a card player, a believer in witches, ghosts, signs, lucky and unlucky days; indeed I had gone so far as to declare myself a wizard, and claimed that I could shoot blood from the sun, and by ingenious manipulation of various sorts, I had led many to believe me a genuine wizard.

All these I renounced and gave up. Upon reaching home, I went to work clearing a canebrake. This job I had taken of William Bowman, a brother of the man I had gone to the meeting to fight. I could hardly work, I felt myself such a sinner; and although I had never been guilty of any "outbreaking" sins, yet I felt myself the worst of the bad, and this conviction was so strong that I could not eat, sleep, rest, or work, with any pleasure. While I was in this frame of mind, Frederick "Ned" Bowman came one day to where I was, but we did not fight. He was in the same state of mind as myself, so that we soon settled our difficulty without the use of hard words, or the argument of blows. We each felt ourselves to blame for the trouble, and each felt the other the best man. Elder Bowman had left an appointment to preach at the same place where he had preached before. This place was full forty miles from my father's home. My father gave me permission to attend the meeting, which I did with keen delight, walking the entire distance without apparent fatigue, and reached the place a few minutes before they were ready to open the meeting. Elder Bowman had, about 1812, organized a Methodist Church in this locality, and had put a man on the circuit by the name of Boatman.

A Baptist minister, whose name was Kelly, had come into the community about the same time and

had organized a Baptist Church about five miles from the one organized by Elder Bowman. Soon after the meeting above mentioned, these two preachers having been in a wrangle over the mode of baptism, agreed to hold a public discussion. My father allowed me to go down and hear them. This was a great pleasure to me, as I had been denied the privilege of attending religious meetings for quite a long time, my father not being a believer in them, but for some reason never known to me, he allowed me to go. I have believed that my mother interceded for me.

I again walked the forty miles, arriving as before just in time for the opening. Elder Boatman, the Methodist preacher, spoke first. He made all sorts of fun of Elder Kelly. Indeed he did nothing but ridicule the Baptists and their doctrine. At the close of his address, Elder Kelly made an address. He was more mild, and seemed to possess a better spirit. He supported his statements, and fortified his arguments by quotations from the Scriptures, and impressed his hearers with the truth of his doctrine. When the preachers were through with their speeches, two men in the congregation took up the discussion and continued it in a most excited and vehement manner. They became so excited and angry that they threw off their coats, and would have settled the mode of baptism by physical force,

had not the congregation interfered and restored order. This meeting did me great harm, for it left my mind in a much more unsettled and agitated condition than it had been before, though that were bad enough. On my way home I pondered over the affair. I could but wonder why those who professed to be Christians and to follow Christ, should differ so widely and quarrel so bitterly. On the top of the same mountain on which I had stood when I made the resolution to live a better life, I made another resolution, which was, that I would try to get education enough to read the "Good Word" for myself. Both ministers in the debate quoted the Scriptures, and declared their quotations to be Bible truths. Each of them was positively certain of his ground and knew he was right. But it did not seem reasonable to me that there were two kinds of baptism, and if there were, and both were right, then why should they dispute and quarrel in public about it? All the time as I trudged over the mountains on my homeward way, I kept saying, "Oh, that I could read the Bible for myself!" I was determined to know how to read the Book, but how to accomplish it I knew not. There were no books and no schools. About this time another Baptist preacher moved into the community and took charge of the church of which Kelly had been pastor, and he wanted me to join the Baptist Church. He gave

me a copy of the New Testament, and then it was that I commenced that long and hard struggle with ignorance, which ended in my knowing how to read the Book. I had been taught the names of the letters composing our English Alphabet, but never having seen a letter, I could not pick them out when I saw them in the book. I was fully determined to master the reading and to be able to look into the perfect law of liberty for myself. This determination helped me wonderfully in the accomplishing of the task. I soon learned to recognize the letters by sight, but how to put them into words and find out what they meant puzzled me greatly. I learned how to put them together at night, after the day's work was done, and other members of the family had retired to rest. I would carry down pine knots from the mountain side during the day, and by the light of these at night, I soon learned to put the letters together so as to form words, and soon after that to put the words together so as to form sentences, and then out of the sentences would grow the paragraphs, and so on until I knew how to read, and in a very short time by this process which I diligently followed, I knew how to read the New Testament quite well. I could not pronounce the hard names, but I never failed to call them something, and sometimes that something proved to be the right pronunciation, but many times it did

not. I came to attach a meaning to the language, which was indeed my own, and this gave more satisfaction than I had ever felt before.

I found that quite often the Scriptures were misquoted, which gave the wrong interpretation, and when I could read and quote for myself, I had but little difficulty in interpreting for myself, and I also found that when the Scriptures were correctly quoted, they sounded different from what they did when misquoted.

Having learned to read, I went down by packtrain to the old settlement and bought a Bible for myself, and also a quire of paper, for I said, if I can learn to read without a teacher, I can also learn to write without a teacher, which I did, and which I found was not so difficult as learning to read.

From the time I heard my first sermon, which I had not forgotten, I had kept on praying and living up to my resolution to be a better man. I can but think, that if God would help a poor, ignorant, superstitious mountain boy, to reach such attainments as I have reached, that no boy of the days in which I write should ever despair, nor should he come short of the best things this life has for the good.

CHAPTER SIX

MY CONVERSION.

After I had learned to read the New Testament, I studied it almost continuously, reading it over, and over, again and again. I found that there was no escaping its influence, nor evading its presence. But as yet no peace, or light, came into my soul. One morning while hunting for the cows, which had strayed away as they often did, far from the house, I went into a thick canebrake and knelt down to pray for light. I had read in my New Testament, that we were to ask, and that it should be given unto us. I said to myself, "Does this mean that light will be given?" After thinking about it for a while, in my backwoods way, I said, "Well here goes," if I get an answer to my prayer, then it means light, and if I do not, why then it does not mean light, but something else. When I first knelt down, all was dark about me, as well as within my soul, or so at least it seemed to me. During all the days since I heard my first sermon, I had been walking in darkness, but had faithfully kept my vow to live a better man, and to learn to read the New Testament; the last I had accomplished, nor do I now think, that I had failed in the

first, but I felt when I made the vow, that one needed something more than correctness in his conduct; he needs as I now know, the Lord Jesus Christ, formed within him, the hope of glory. I had not been long upon my knees, when the change came, and I was deeply conscious of it, too. A light burst in upon my soul so great in its intensity and brilliancy, that I opened my eyes in wonder and amazement, and found that the light seemed to be shining all about me. I knew that I was saved; the load had fallen off, the burden was gone, and a peace so calm and holy had come into my soul, that I realized beyond the possibility of a doubt, the saving grace and precious presence of my Heavenly Father. I felt myself a new man. I was changed all over, and I began in the most literal way to examine myself, to see whether or not I was the same "Abe" that had started out that morning to find my father's cattle. I seemed to wonder most of all, what made the change. As I stood there enjoying the peace, wondering at the light, and pondering in my mind how it all came about, I thought of Paul's experience when on his way to Damascus, whither he was going, to cast the saints into prison, and to kill, and otherwise afflict the followers of Christ; how a light from heaven above the brightness of the noonday sun, shone down upon him, and how then and there he

was made conscious of sin, and the presence of Jesus Christ. I well knew that I had not persecuted the believers, but had with an honest heart and unselfish motive, tried to help the people to live better lives. It came to me, that the light was given to Paul for his benefit, and that afterward he became God's chosen vessel to the Gentiles—a great preacher of righteousness, and while I did not think that I should ever be a preacher, and certainly never a great one, yet it did occur to me, that the light had come for my good, and I humbly bowed before God, and accepted it as such. Then I called to mind that it was for light, that I had prayed, and here it was, in answer to my prayer. With these thoughts in my mind, a sweet peace in my soul, and a heavenly light all about me, I stood transformed in character, and seemingly transfixed to earth. How long I remained in this silent ecstasy I do not know, nor how long I would have remained, I do not know, had not the cows kicked up their heels, which act I took to mean that they were praising God, and at which I shouted at the top of my voice Hallelujah! Hallelujah! over and over again. So full of joy was I at being filled with all the fullness of God, that for the time being I lost all consciousness of time, and my surroundings. When I finally did regain myself, I hastened home, and found my mother sitting in the door of the cabin knitting.

I immediately knelt at her side, and laid my head in her lap, and there wept out a fullness of joy, such as the heart can only know when Jesus Christ comes into it. I found voice enough to say to her, "Mother, I have found my Saviour! Found the forgiveness of my sins!" "I saw a light while I was praying."

By this time my father had entered the house and hearing my cries, and what I had said to my mother, said, "Are you crazy?" "No, sir," I replied, "but I have found what I have been seeking for so long!" I was so earnest about it, and told the story with such straightforward simplicity, my face shining all the while, as my mother afterward told me, that it made a lasting impression on my father's mind.

While in the days of seeking, I had learned the following song, which at the time of my conversion, and indeed even now, expresses my joy. I sang it over several times, and the words and the melody were comforting to my soul.

Jesus my all to heaven is gone,
He whom I fix my hopes upon;
His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way till Him I view.

The way the holy prophets went,
The road that leads from banishment,

The King's highway of holiness,
I'll go, for all His paths are peace.

This is the way I long have sought,
And mourned because I found it not;
My grief, my burden long has been,
Because I was not freed from sin.

The more I strove against its power,
I felt its weight and guilt the more;
Till late I heard my Saviour say,
"Come hither, soul, I AM THE WAY."

Lo! glad I come, and thou, blest Lamb,
Shalt take me to Thee as I am;
My sinful self to Thee I give,
Nothing but love shall I receive.

Then will I tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I'll point to Thy redeeming blood,
And say, "Behold the way to God."

Later on in my Christian experience, I learned the following song, the singing of which also brought great comfort and peace to me.

Pursue my thoughts the pleasing theme
'Twas not a fancy, nor a dream!

'Twas grace descending from the skies,
And it was marvelous in my eyes!
Long had I mourned like one forgot—
Long had my soul for comfort sought!
Jesus was witness to my tears,
And Jesus sweetly calmed my fears!

He cleansed my soul, and changed my dress,
And clothed me with His righteousness!
He spake at once, my sins forgiven,
And I rejoiced as if in heaven!
How I was struck with sweet surprise,
While glory shone before my eyes!
How I did sing from day to day!—
And wished to sing myself away!

And still a little later on, I learned the following from Brigg's collection of hymns, the singing of which was also a great comfort and delight which I often repeated, and frequently sang:

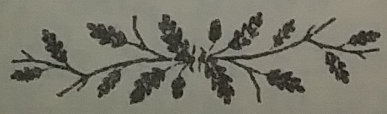
"The world with all its pomp and show—
'Twas less than nothing to my view,
Redeeming love was all my theme,
And life appeared an idle dream!
I gloried in my Saviour's grace,
And sang my great Redeemer's praise!
My soul then longed to soar away—
And leave her tenement of clay!

Away my doubts, begone my fears!
The wonder of the Lord appears.
The wonders that my Saviour wrought.
Oh how delightful is the thought!
The wonders of redeeming love,
When first my heart was drawn above!
When first I saw my Saviour's face,
And triumphed in redeeming grace."

After my conversion, having learned to read, I took great delight in reading the Scriptures, and not infrequently some passage would fasten itself upon my mind with great force, and then I would find no rest until I had talked with one or more persons about it. I frequently chose "to talk it out" at cotton pickings, log rollings, house raising, and even at dances, as I sometimes went to the log cabin dance. Nearly always I asked leave of the company when I wanted to talk, and then I would say what was in my heart and on my mind to say, and sometimes I would also read portions from the New Testament. I did this so often and followed this course so unbrokenly, that people began to call me "the preacher." During these times when I talked to the people, some would make sport of me, others would be respectful, and some would be touched, and even melted to tears, often weeping as though their hearts would break. As

has been said before, I was never conscious of fear. It had been a part of my training not to fear anything.

From childhood the people of that age and country, were taught to be brave. To be a coward, was the lowest and most degrading of all life, so that from the first, bravery was implanted in my very being. To me, bravery was the greatest honor to which I could attain in this world. And this training and spirit, helped me greatly to bear the gibes, and taunts, the scorn and derision, of those who would not accept my Christ, nor hear my message concerning Him.



CHAPTER SEVEN

MY FIRST APPOINTMENTS.

It was now 1814, and I was in the twentieth year of my age. I felt so forcibly the call to the ministry that without hesitation, preparation, or even church membership, I began to give out appointments. I at first confined my labors to the mountains of Kentucky and Virginia entirely, for these mountains and a small part of old Kentucky was about all the world I knew. The people of to-day have little idea of the ignorance and superstition of the time in which I then lived. It seems to me at times, that it were not possible for people to have been so ignorant as we then were. The people seemed much surprised that I had learned so much. My intimate acqaintances in particular were very much astonished, and were not a little proud of one who had thus distinguished himself. But they did not know, nor could I make them know the state of mind that caused me to work so hard in the accomplishment of the task I had set for myself.

I would have given all the world (had I possessed it) had I been able to read the Bible for myself. It was this longing burning desire to know the truth. I wanted to see and know the blessed words

for myself, and not have to depend upon the words of another concerning them. To see and know the words on the page of God's blessed Book; that caused me to put forth the effort I did. This longing for the truth was born in my heart on hearing the Methodist and the Baptist trying to prove the right and wrong modes of baptism. I knew that both could not be right, but which one was right, was the all-absorbing thought, and consuming fire of my mind and heart. They both claimed to have quoted the Scriptures bearing on the subject, and each claimed for his side, the proper interpretation. One or the other must have misquoted, and misinterpreted, but which one? It was while thus thinking, that the desire to read for myself would almost consume me, for I felt that every man must read and know for himself, and that to teach the truth of the Bible in a wrong manner, was almost, if not quite, the unpardonable sin. It was now that for the first time in my life I began to hear of improvements. Up to this time in my life, I had never seen a clock, had never seen a wagon, had never eaten a meal from an earthen plate, had never seen a table knife, spoon or fork. I knew nothing of queensware or anything of the kind. We had wooden and pewter plates, and some of the more well-to-do people, had pewter spoons. Some had wooden spoons and wooden forks, which had

been whittled out by the hunter, with his hunting knife while he waited for the game, or sat about his fire during the long winter nights. When I heard of these things, I made up my mind that I would see them for myself, and that I would know a little more of the world than was to be known in the mountains of my native state. I accordingly packed a "back load" of furs, and carried them to Mount Sterling, a distance of one hundred miles, and traded them there for cloth enough to make a suit of clothes, for up to that time, I had never had a suit of clothes, other than that which had been made of buck skin.

Having heard in my mountain home, of a great river called the Ohio, and a state lying on the other side of it, by the same name, I made up my mind that I would go and see them, and so accordingly, I went direct from Mount Sterling, to Cincinnati, located on the Ohio river. Here everything was entirely new to me. Had I gotten into a new world, things would not have been more strange, nor I less accustomed to them. I did not know how to conduct myself, and especially was this true when in company, and at table. The knives and forks made such a noise, that I would become confused, and often my fork would slip from my hand, and push my victuals from my plate onto the table. People would laugh at me and my awkwardness,

and sometimes I would laugh at myself, my behavior seemed so ridiculous, and so out of all harmony with good manners. I soon learned how to eat with a knife and fork, and that difficulty was out of the way. The next and perhaps most surprising thing of all to me, was to see so many churches and people. I was utterly astonished at seeing people pass by one church, and go to another, a great distance from the one that was convenient to them. I was told that there were Methodists, and Presbyterians, and Baptists, and several other denominations, each of which had its separate meeting house, and that its members were simply going to their own churches to worship.

This seemed strange and useless to me; I could not understand it. I learned that they all professed to worship the same God, and that they read the same Bible. I was very ignorant in worldly matters and lacked every essential of the high-toned polished Christian society, yet I sought out the various churches, and made it my business to hear all the different ministers preach. I also sought out the preachers, and talked with them concerning their different beliefs, for up to this time, except the difference that existed between the Baptists and the Methodists in the region of my mountain home upon the mode of Baptism, I had never heard that churches of different names and belief existed.

I became so well acquainted with the different doctrines, dogmas and disciplines, that I made up my mind that I could not unite with any of them. We differed widely on many points, and I stood alone. I had joined no church, and I sometimes thought I never could, for it seemed to me that each one was trying harder to build up his own church than he was to save sinners from death, and establish the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. My mind dwelt continuously upon these things. I could not solve the mystery! I prayed over it, and asked the Lord to enlighten me, to show me the way to make me know which of all the denominations was right. After I had prayed over the matter I felt better satisfied, but more determined that it would never do for me to unite with any one of them. I felt quite sure, that not one of them was absolutely right, and for the present, there I left the matter. My next move was to Lawrenceburg, Ohio, where I for the first time held meetings in Ohio. I tried to preach from Revelation 1:7, which reads as follows:

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him! Even so, Amen."

I have never preached a sermon which seemed to have more weight with the hearers than did this

one. It was a great weeping time, and I think as great a sin-killing time. From here I went back to my home in Kentucky, having been absent eight months. My old friends and associates were much surprised to hear of my return, for Ohio was so far away, that it seemed that one could hardly get back who ventured so far, and then it was believed that Ohio was a very sickly state, so that when one went from the mountains of Kentucky, to Ohio, that he would not live long, so that when they saw me start for the Ohio river, they believed that it was the final farewell. Upon my return they gathered in from all parts of the neighborhood to see me, and when they saw me looking so well they seemed utterly astonished, and could hardly believe that it was their old companion. But if they were surprised at seeing me return, it was mild compared with their surprise at what I told them I had seen and heard. They sat in "open eyed" wonder and amazement, while I related to them, how the people lived in cities. I had learned so much of city life, (though I knew but little) how the city people dressed, ate, and lived, that my old companions who had never been beyond the mountain ranges of their native state, could not believe that one person could ever see and hear so much, and I well-nigh lost my reputation for truth and veracity, by the stories I told them of my travels. My suit of

clothes was the one for which I had traded my furs, and which they called a "civilian's suit" meaning a citizen's suit, and as they had never before seen a suit, other than that made of buckskin, they thought it a very fine outfit indeed. I am glad to say that their praise of my suit, and their astonishment at my "exceeding great knowledge," did not make me proud but had the opposite effect upon my mind, and made me feel all the more a sinner; but a sinner saved by grace. Immediately upon returning home, I began holding meetings in various localities, and continued them for two months. I got permission from Major Wiley Cooper, to preach in his house. He said that he thought it very strange that a raccoon and bear hunter, could become such a preacher in so short a time. But I was not much of a preacher. My hearers were uneducated mountaineers, and any one who could talk with feeling, and read the Bible was to them a great preacher. One thing, however, I must say, that the weight of truth was upon me so much, that I could not hold my peace. I was deeply in earnest. I felt the truth of what I preached. I loved my companions. I wanted to see them saved. I felt the weight of their immortal souls upon my own, and saw the importance of their accepting Christ. I had some opportunity to lead them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, and

I felt that I would meet them at the Judgment, and I wanted to be clear of the blood of all men, and this gave me a sort of vehement earnestness, which greatly impressed the people. I now feel that I did my duty, and am willing to leave the results in the hands of a "Just God," who seeth in secret, and rewardeth His children openly.

When these meetings were over, I returned to Ohio. On my way I heard of the Newlight Presbyterians, and the Marshalites. I also heard all sorts of bad reports about them. It was commonly reported that they would "run the devil up a tree, and then bark at him," and many other sayings of like character. I also heard while on my way of the "bodily exercises," such as falling, jerking, and laughing, which wonders I soon witnessed for myself. Some would fall and lie for hours as if entirely dead; others would jerk backward and forward, with such force that the hair on a woman's head would snap like the cracker on a wagon whip. Some would commence to laugh, and continue until they were completely exhausted, and yet they could not stop. In a general way it may be said of these bodily exercises, that at every gathering, hundreds, and sometimes thousands would fall and remain in a state of stupor for hours. Their breathing became slow, and all the physical faculties were apparently suspended. As the enthusiasm became more intense

those who fell would begin to roll. One bodily exercise followed another; the rolls were succeeded by the jerks. The jerks consisted of throwing the head and upper half of the body backward and forward. There seemed to be no limit to these excesses. Congregations would begin to laugh, and at times the holy laugh became so vociferous that it could be heard for miles. When the revival was at its height the jerks were accompanied by the barks. Forced, as the victims claimed to be, to impersonate a dog, they fell on all fours and barked and snapped and showed their teeth in such a manner as to fill the spectators with horror.

These exercises were manifest in almost every denomination, and they had a good effect for they often took hold of the most wicked men, and never left them until they came out on the Lord's side.

I often wondered if this was the Lord's work, so strange and irresistible. I often wondered why I did not have "the bodily exercise." When I arrived in Cincinnati I engaged to work at a dollar per day, and my board. With some of the money I earned I bought myself some more clothes. I attended meetings, and held meetings as I had opportunity. About this time I heard of the "Shaking Quakers" out in Warren County, Ohio, near the town of Lebanon. So strange were the stories about this strange people, that I made up my mind

that I would go and investigate for myself. The strange stories told of the Shaking Quakers were all justified in my mind by their strange actions. They believed that Christ had made His second advent in the person of Ann Lee. They forbade marriage, and held sexual intercourse to be a great sin either in, or out of wedlock. They held that all their preaching was a direct revelation to them from God, through Ann Lee. In their worship, they preach, pray, sing, and dance. They dress plainly, and are very neat and clean, and everything is kept in the best possible order. They teach that those who would not literally forsake father, mother, husband, wife, children, houses and lands, and go with them would be eternally lost. The men and women live in separate apartments, and should there be children born in a home, the parents are compelled to separate, the children are placed in care of a teacher, and the parents have no more control over them. This rule is applied to parents joining their society after children have been born to them. Persons joining them, having property in their name, must sell said property, and turn the money over to the church. The money thus secured becomes common property, and is managed by the directors who control all the affairs of the church, even to deciding what sort of work each one shall do.

I stayed here long enough to conclude that "I could not see wit with them," nor could I see much Bible in their doctrines and teachings, for no such practices were found in the life of the Saviour, either in word or by example. I could not find their doctrine in the Bible, nor could I determine why it was that all Christians could not worship together, all going to one church; nor could I find out why there were so many different denominations, and so I did not stay with the "Shaking Quakers." Here is what history says of them:

Their religious tenets are as follows: They claim that there is a new dispensation taking place, in which the saints shall reign a thousand years with Christ, and attain to perfection. That they have entered into this state, and that they are the only church in the world, and that they have all the apostolic gifts.

They assert that all external ordinances, especially baptism, and the Lord's Supper, ceased in the apostolic age, and that God had never sent man to preach since that time, until this new dispensation took effect. They were sent to call in the elect. They attempted to prove this doctrine of a new dispensation, by counting the mystical numbers specified in the prophecies of Daniel, as well as by their signs and wonders. They believe that God, through Jesus Christ, in the church, is reconciled

to man, and that Christ has come as a light into human nature, to enlighten every man who cometh into the world, without distinction. That no man is born of God until by faith, he is assimilated to the character of Jesus Christ in the church.

That, in obedience to that church, faith will increase until he becomes one with Christ, in the Millennium Church.

That every man is a free moral agent, to walk in the light, and choose or reject the truth of God within him, and consequently it is in every man's power to be obedient to the faith.

That it is the gospel of the first resurrection, which is now preached in their church.

That all who are born of God, as they explain the new birth, shall never taste the second death.

That those who are said to be regenerated among Christians, are only regenerated in part, therefore not assimilated into the character of Christ, in His church, while in the present state, and consequently not tasting the happiness of the first resurrection, cannot escape in part the second death.

That the word "everlasting" when applied to the punishment of the wicked, refers only, to a limited space of time, excepting in the case of those who "fall from the church;" and for such there is no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor the world that is to come! They quote Matt. 12:32. "And

whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." They use this to prove the doctrine that the second death, having power over such that rise not in the character of Christ in the first resurrection, will in due time fill up the measure of His suffering beyond the grave.

That the righteousness and suffering of Christ in His members are both one, but that every man suffers personally with inexpressible woe and misery for sins not repented of notwithstanding this union until redemption.

That Christ will never make any public appearance as a single person—but only in His saints.

That the judgment day is now begun in the church, and the books are opened—the dead are now rising, and coming to judgment, and they are set to judge the world.

For this they quote I Cor. 6:2. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"

They say that their Church has come out of natural generation, (that is they discard marriage) to be as Christ was, and that those who had wives be as though they had none.

That by these means, heaven begins on earth, and thereby they lose their sexual and earthly relation to Adam the first, and come to be transparent in their ideas in the bright and heavenly visions of God.

That there is no salvation out of obedience to the sovereignty of their dominion.

That all sins which are committed against God, are committed against them, and must be pardoned for Christ's sake, through them, and confession must be made to them for that purpose.

They hold to travail and labor for departed spirits.

The discipline of their denomination is founded on the supposed perfection of their leader.

The mother, it is said, obeys God through Christ, European elders obey her, American laborers and common people obey her, while confession is made of every secret in nature, from the oldest, to the youngest.

People are made to believe that they are seen through and through, by them in the gospel of perfection, by their teachers, whom they say, behold the state of the dead, and innumerable worlds of spirits, good and bad.

These persons are generally taught to be industrious, and to give according to their ability.

They vary in their exercises. Their heaving dancing, as it is called, is performed by a perpetual

springing from the floor, about four inches, up and down, both in the men's and women's apartments, moving about with extraordinary transport, singing, sometimes just one, and sometimes more parts, making a perfect charm.

This elevation, effects the nerves so much, that they have intervals of shuddering, as if they were in a strong fit of ague.

They sometimes clap their hands, and leap, so they strike the joist above their heads.

They throw off their outside garments in their exercises, and spend their strength very cheerfully in this way.

Their chief speaker often calls their attention, then they all stop and listen to a harangue—and then fall to dancing again.

They assert that their dancing is a token of their great joy and happiness of the New Jerusalem state, and their victory over sin.

One of the postures that increases among them, is turning around very swiftly for an hour or two. This, they say, is to show the great power of God.

They sometimes fall on their knees and make a sound like the roaring of many waters, with groans and cries to God, as they say, for the wicked world which persecutes them.

In 1828 the number of their societies was 18. The number of preachers about forty-five.

Members gathered into these societes, about four thousand five hundred; those not received about nine hundred, making in all five thousand four hundred.

Ann Lee was the founder of this sect in America. She was born in Manchester, England, in the year 1736. She called herself "Ann The Word."

The man called Jesus, and the woman called Ann, were considered the two anointed ones, and the two first pillars of the church.

The English people put Ann in the madhouse for about three weeks. After which she came to America—1774.

The commotion in the religious world in 1780 brought her in a fine harvest of deluded followers. After she had taken away their earrings, necklaces, buckles, and everything that goes to nourish pride, and had them cut their hair off close to their ears, she admitted them into the church.

After this, they were probably ashamed to be seen by their associates and so remained "Shaking Quakers."

Ann Lee asserted that she was not liable to the assaults of death, but would ascend to heaven in the twinkling of an eye. But unhappily for her claims, she died.

From Shakertown, I went to Columbus, Ohio, where I preached, and where I was bitterly opposed by the sects, or denomination.

I preached the Christian doctrine. (New Lights, as they called us.) I did this, because I honestly believed it, and was unable to see the truth in any other light. I earnestly sought for light, and believed that had I been wrong in my preaching, God would have shown me my error; for has He not told us, that if any man lack wisdom let him ask of the Lord who giveth liberally and upbraideth not?

Let it be as it may, God saw fit to use me as an humble instrument in doing much good, for my preaching made lasting impressions upon many who heard me. From Columbus, I went to the Muskingum river where I held a series of meetings which resulted in a great awakening and from there I went to Hawkings river, where I had great success in the meetings I held. While the people listened, the tears would roll down their faces, and they would wipe them away with their coat sleeves, in the good old fashioned backwoods way. It seemed to me, that the dear Saviour walked with me every where I went, and that He blessed me and my work, for His own name's sake. When I saw what I did in these meetings, I did not wonder that the hearts of the disciples burned within them as they communed by the way. There were times when the voice

of the Saviour seemed audible to me, saying, "Fear not, for I am with thee, even unto the end of the world," and this was the secret of my success.

Oh, how thankful I am that He made me a minister of His grace, and commissioned me to carry salvation to a lost and ruined world, and that He has so constantly crowned my efforts with success, so that I have seen many souls brought out of sin into the marvelous light and liberty of Jesus Christ. I would rather be a minister of the gospel, than to climb to the top of the ladder of fame, and possess all the riches of this world. Crossing over into Virginia at the falls, I held meetings and sought to impress the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, home upon the minds of those who came to hear me.

Some would weep, and appear to be impressed, but the result of the meetings I do not know. Only eternity will reveal the result of my stay in this locality.

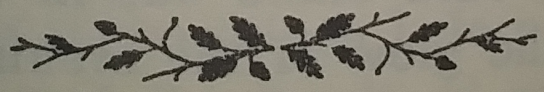
From the "Falls" I went over to the Kanawha river, traveling up and down the course of the river, holding meetings with good results. The Lord was with me, and greatly blessed my labors, for which I thank His holy name, for it was not I, but the Christ that worked through me that brought the good.

At Cole river I did not hold meetings, but going on to Losses Valley I held a great number of meet-

ings, the Lord blessing my labors to His glory and the good of the people. I held one meeting at Mad river, and from there went to Guiann, and from there to the Beechfork of the Big Sandy river, where I held one meeting.

While on the Big Sandy river, I went to Tugg fork, and held several meetings, being told while there, that I was the first preacher ever in that locality. While holding this meeting, the people came out in great numbers, all dressed in the garb of the mountaineer, and were either hunters or ginseng diggers. This river is the dividing line between Virginia and Kentucky, the country with little exception being very hilly and even mountainous. The valley of the river is a beautiful one, and often I would stand out in the dawn of the morning, or the glow of the evening, and drink in the beauty of the scenery, until my soul would be filled with overflowing gratitude and praise, to the Giver of all good, and uncovering my head would stand in silent awe. The valley is covered with beautiful, tall pine trees, and often while looking at them, I would be made to exclaim, "How beautiful are thy works, Oh Lord God Almighty!" From here I returned to the Big Sandy River, and following it up, almost to its source, I preached almost every day and night, leaving as I believe, lasting impressions for good upon the people. I crossed over to

Quick-Sand river, and thence to the Kentucky river, where I held some meetings with about the same results as accompanied my other efforts.



CHAPTER EIGHT

MY SECOND VISIT HOME.

After closing my meeting on the Kentucky river, I went home. Father was at this time, living farther down on the Quick Sands. I very much desired that he should move to Ohio, and gave him a glowing description of the people, the land, and the opportunities afforded those who lived there, and showed him how much more we would come to know in Ohio, than we ever would in Kentucky. My earnest desire to move to Ohio, and my constant persuading father to do so, caused him, about the year 1815, to decide to remove to the state across the river. This, of course, pleased me very much, for I greatly desired to obtain all the knowledge I could, and felt sure that in Ohio, I should have much better opportunities than I could have in Kentucky. The advantages were much better in Ohio, as I well knew, and for one reason, if for no other, the people cared more for better things than they did in Kentucky. The people of the region of my father's cared for nothing, but to hunt, get together and smoke, chew tobacco, and rehearse to each other, the many narrow escapes they had met with while hunting; but they never once thought

that they owed their deliverance to divine providence.

Our household goods were packed in convenient form for the back of a horse, for that was all the convenience we had or could have at that time, but fortunately we did not possess an over-abundance of domestic necessities.

The household goods were put on the backs of three horses, and mother and four of the smaller children had also to ride on these horses. There were nine in the family at that time, so that after mother and the four smaller children had been put on the horses, with the bundles of goods, there were four of us left to walk. We took the nearest road to Butler County, Ohio. Arriving at Butler County, my oldest brother and I had to hire out to work, in order to support the family. My father had been a hunter so long, that he felt himself unfitted for anything else, and being somewhat out of the game regions, there was little for him to do, so there was nothing left for brother and I but to earn a living for the family. I should have introduced my brother William before this, to those who may read this book. He was a quiet, peaceful, hardworking, bashful man; and if ever there was a devoted Christian man, whose daily life was always and ever Christ-like, that man was my brother William. He had while I was away on one of my traveling tours, joined the

Methodist Church, and he was a Methodist, soul and body. We did not always agree in matters of doctrine, and many an argument we had, which only served to leave each of us, more determined in our way of thinking than we were before.

One day my brother William came to me, more excited than I had ever before seen him, and told me that Rev. Wilhelm, a presiding elder in the Methodist Church, was going to prove that sprinkling was the apostolic mode of baptism, and he wanted me to go and hear him do it. I readily agreed to attend the meeting, but at the same time thought that it was a useless thing to do, for I was rooted and grounded in my belief on the subject of baptism, and knew that my brother was likewise. The sermon was to be preached about sixty miles from where we lived, and my brother secured a horse to ride, and I walked by his side the entire distance. During that long walk, I did not cease to pray, that if I was in error that I should be shown the right, and led into the light of the truth upon the question.

The meeting opened in the usual way, but the presiding elder certainly took unfair means in the very beginning of his discourses, to prove his point, which more than ever convinced me, that I was right in my own views of the subject, and when he had concluded I was convinced that immersion was the

only true mode of baptism, and that any other mode was not baptism at all.

The elder said, that Enon where John baptized, was a mere spring, and that the Jordan river was not more than six inches deep; yet it is recorded that David crossed the Jordan in a ferry boat, when fleeing from his son Absalom, and that the river overflows its banks in the harvest time. The Bible also tells us, that a servant of Elisha lost an ax in the Jordan, and that the prophet asked the Lord to make the iron to swim which He did and the servant reached out his hand and got it again. Now any one can see that if the water had been but six inches deep, the servant could have waded out and got the ax himself, without any divine interposition. It seemed to me that the sermon was made up of assertions, with but little argument, and not much Scripture; but most of his hearers seemed pleased with his sermon, and were evidently convinced that he was a great preacher, and that he had established his point beyond a question. The most of his audience were unable to read, and believed what he told them. They were very anxious that I should become a Methodist, and in their efforts to convince me that the Methodist Church was the only one that held the truth, they caused many arguments between myself and my brother, and between me and many others. I could not

conscientiously go with them, thinking it better to follow the dictates of my own conscience, even if I walked alone.

Many of them were genuine good Christians, among them I mention my brother, who after our removal to Ohio was licensed to exhort among them, but he never traveled much, because of his ill health.

The fall following our removal to Ohio, I returned to Kentucky to assist my brother-in-law, Thomas Davidson, in moving to the same state. We were two months in making the trip. I held several meetings while on this trip, and as I believe with good results to the cause. Upon my arrival at home, I found that I must give my time to the support of the family, as they were getting along very poorly. During this time my mind became more and more clouded, and I finally concluded to give up preaching altogether and give my entire time to the support of the family. My views upon nearly all subjects, were in direct opposition to the expressed views of all those about me. I was annoyed by almost every one I met, for they would try to convince me that I was wrong, and that they were right, and seek to persuade me to give up my doctrine, and come over to theirs. I felt all the worse over their efforts, seeing they could not read for themselves, but took the statements of such men as Elder Wilhelm. Men who could not read for

themselves, were altogether likely to believe all that the preacher would say, no matter how unreasonable his statements might be. With the Bible open before me, I could not help knowing that some of the preachers in order to maintain their doctrines, preached things not to be found in the Scriptures. This troubled me so much that I could not sleep. It seemed to me, that an error in doctrine was not so bad as an error in practice, and I could but know that some of these ministers were leading many of their hearers astray, and being alone, I was powerless to help them to see the truth. I prayed over it often, and this was my only relief, that after praying, I always felt comforted.

My First Knowledge of a Singing School.

I had been hearing people talk a great deal about the "Singing School" where one could learn to sing, by note. Whenever any of the young people would meet me, they would say, "Abe, have you been to Singing School?" and then they would go on to say "Oh, I tell you, they are grand." "They learn you to start tunes by little round and square dots in a book!" "They say that one can sing any tune in a hymn book by them!" "And more than that, we can learn to sing in one of four different voices!" "Just think of it Abe, one person can do all that, and we have lots of fun and a fine time

besides!" I wanted to go to a singing school, and in this as in everything else, I had a curiosity to see and hear for myself. It seemed very strange to me that one person could sing in four different voices at the same time. As my plan had been all my life to solve a mystery, if possible, so I determined to attend the "Singing School" and see what, and how, things were done. I made up my mind that the first chance I had, I would go and find out all I could about the new arrangement. It required very hard work for me to get enough for the family to live on and as it required all I made, I had to postpone my going for some little time. But at last I found my chance, and off I went to my first singing school, which school was taught by a Mr. Hull, and fortunately not far away from our home. When I arrived, I found quite a company of young people had already gathered, and were sitting around in groups. Some of them were courting, some were laughing, and some were talking nonsense, and one young fellow was sitting beside another fellow's girl, very much to the latter's discomfort. The young man who was compelled to watch in silent sorrow the ecstasy of the young man beside his girl, seemed to wish that he had never seen a singing school, or that the young fellow who sat beside his girl, had been kept at home by a sore throat, a broken leg, or even something worse, so that he might sit beside his

own Mariah Jane. I had no girl to attract my attention, and so I enjoyed the uncomfortableness of the fellow who had, and yet did not have. He seemed to say to the other fellow, I wish you were at home. I wish I was in your place, I wouldn't care where you were, if only I could sit where you are now sitting. He was indeed forlorn and gloomy. As I entered the room, the young folks all called out, "Why there is Abe Snethen!" "Hello Abe!" "How are you, Abe?" "Got to Singing School, did ye!" This greeting I appreciated, for notwithstanding I stuck to my religious views, and lived them as best I could, I had many warm friends among the young people, all of whom seemed to be fond of me. The master came in, and said it was time for the singing to begin, and said for them all to keep their seats until he had tried their voices, and then he could tell them what part they were best adapted to. I sat still, and looked, and listened, but I could not see a bit of sense in any of it, but I concluded to stay and see it through, and I did. I had been leading my own singing in all my meetings, and I thought that I had been doing it well, too. The teacher held a long stick in his hand, which he called a "beater," and with it he beat time for the singers. The teacher told us to open our books at a certain place, which we did, and he then said that he would sing the song through first, so as to give

us an idea of the tune and the time. The very first thing he did was to lift his beater and say as he moved it first to the left, then to the right, then up, and then down—left—right—up—down—one—two—three—four. After repeating these words and motions several times, he sang the song by what he called the notes. They were called "Buck-wheat" notes. When the teacher had sung the song through, he told us to try it. Well, try it we did, and try was the sum total of the effort, for not one there, knew anything at all about singing by note.

We knew "Old Hundred," "How tedious and tasteless the hours," "Come thou fount of every blessing," "Come ye sinners poor and needy," and songs of that sort. And we knew nothing at all about time. At our meetings if one finished the verse several words ahead of some one else, nothing at all was thought of it. I have known some to have finished the last word of a verse, before others had reached the last word of the first line, but that made no difference. Some always made a point of holding on to the last word, until others had started in on the succeeding verse, but no one paid any attention to that. You can readily see, that no one knew anything about time nor did any one care anything about it either. But we all sang, and tried to follow the teacher. The most amusing part of it all, to me, was the effort of the singers to beat time.

When the teacher would say up, down would go their hands; when he would say down, up would go their hands, and when he would say right, all hands went to the left, and when he would say left, then all hands waved to the right, and when told of their ways, some corrected their motions, and others did not, and some would wave their hands faster, hoping as I supposed, to catch up with the time, and start in anew with the right motion. As the motions of their hands increased, so did the rapidity of their words until there was little but confusion of the worst confused sort.

After awhile the teacher selected the persons who were to try the several parts. Some were to sing the air, some were to sing the second treble, some were to sing the tenor, and some the bass. When all were ready, the teacher said all together, on the down beat, and sing: do—re—mi—fa—sol—la—si—do.

When they had gone through with this exercise, which sounded to me like cows bawling and pigs squealing, and was to me disgusting in the extreme, some of them wanted to know, if I would join the class, and I promptly told them I would not. I said I would rather make my own tunes, and sing them myself, and thought I would make more music than they had done. Still they urged me to join, offering as inducements the "lots of fun" and the

possibility of me getting a girl. I had no girl of my own, and all there seemed to be taken, so that had I gotten one, I should have had to cheat some fellow out of his, which would have been contrary to my conscience. As I did not want a girl, nor to learn to sing, and cared nothing for the fun, I did not join the singing class, but in after years I saw much sense, and great advantage in the *do re mi's* which I at that time thought so useless, and have had great need of what I might have then learned. During the recess, a certain young man tried to cause a diversion by speaking lightly of the Christian Church, calling it names, and telling hard stories about the members. He tried to direct the attention of the young ladies to me, referring to me as a "New Light" preacher, but the young ladies listened to me, and paid no attention to what the young man was trying to say. One of the young ladies came to me, and introducing herself, told me that she was a member of the Christian Church, and asked me if I were not. I told her I was not a member of the Christian Church, but that I liked the church, so far as I knew anything about it. She asked me if I preached the Christian doctrine. I told her that I tried to preach the Bible, and if that was Christian doctrine, then I preached it.

We had quite a long and interesting conversation on this subject, during which I told her that none

of the denominations suited me, even though they professed to preach the Bible. That their doctrines did not suit me a bit. She finally told me that the Christian Church was going to hold a camp meeting not far from there and insisted upon me attending and hearing for myself. She asked me to go with her, which in those days was perfectly proper, for a young lady was at liberty to ask a young gentleman to go with her, anywhere she desired and no remarks were made about it. This custom gave the young woman the right and advantage of selecting the man she wanted, and of evading the man she did not want. It gave the young lady a better chance to suit herself, and the young man a chance to get left, such as neither do not now have.

The young lady who asked me to go to the meeting with her, was Miss Lottie Brown, and when the time came, Miss Lottie, myself and others, went to the meeting, and there I heard for the first time in my life, a Christian minister preach. The meeting was held on Hanna's Creek, and the preacher, who seemed to be in charge was Elder David Purviance. Elder John Hardy was there, and was the first Christian minister I ever heard preach. I liked his sermon very well, and had a long conversation with him afterward upon different points of doctrine, and found that we agreed in all essential things.

Not long after this, I attended a meeting held on Seven Mile Creek, which was in charge of Elder Reuben Dooley. I liked his preaching, and furthermore, I thought if these men were fair samples of the ministry of the Christian Church, and the Church took the Bible for its creed and doctrine, that I would be satisfied in such a church. Since my conviction, I had held certain views of the Bible, views which seemed to have been born with my turning to God, but not until I met with these men, had I found any who believed as I did.

While I was working in College Township, Butler County, Ohio, I had contracted to clear five acres of wood land, for one Robert Morris. At this time two quite elderly gentlemen, with their families settled in this neighborhood. They were members of the Methodist Church, They held prayer meetings, and held a revival, during which many professed religion. They tried to arrange for circuit preaching, but did not succeed, for the reason that preachers were scarce, and the circuits new and large. At the close of one of their prayer-meetings, I arose and told them that if they would open their house to a Christian preacher, I would get one to come and preach for them. I had no sooner spoken, than one of the men —Daugherty by name—arose and said with great warmth of feeling, that he for one, did not want any "New Light" preachers to come into their meet-

ings, for they were deceivers, and that they denied the blood of Christ. When he had taken his seat I arose and told them, that I had attended several meetings held by the Christians and that I believed with all my heart that they preached the truth according to the Bible, and that if any of the people present would open their house for preaching, I would write to one of the Christian ministers, and have him come and preach, and then the people could judge for themselves. At the close of what I had to say, Daugherty again arose and after repeating what he had before said, told them, that he had been chosen class leader, and he warned them to avoid those "New Light" preachers, telling the people not to have them preach in their houses, or go to hear them should they come that way. When he sat down, I got up and said with much earnestness, that of all the spirits I had met, the sectarian spirit was the worst, and that I hated it. The fact is, and I have no wish to disguise it, I was indignant at hearing a church condemned by those who knew nothing about it except that which they had heard from sectarians like themselves, and I spoke at some length, and in an angry tone of voice. I had made up my mind that the people should hear some of these good men preach, if I could find a house in which to hold the meeting, and could get some of them to come. While I was speaking, Robert Mor-

ris came to the door, and standing on the outside called out, "You can have my house, Flea!" (Flea was the name by which I was known in that community.)

This sudden and unlooked-for announcement fell in their midst like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, and the meeting broke up rather disorderly. From this time on, the Methodists and myself were always locking horns, and they would not allow me to pray in their meetings, nor would they shake hands with me. This did not offend me, nor in any way hurt my feelings, but I prayed God to show them the error of their way, and to open their eyes to the truth. About the time I wanted to write to a minister, I heard of one by the name of Shidler—Elder George Shidler, and the man who told me about him, said he could come nearer bringing heaven down to earth, than any man he had ever heard preach. This pleased me, and I thought he was just the man to settle the Methodists. This spirit I now know was not right, and I am glad to record that it did not last long with me. I wrote to Elder Shidler a long letter, and withheld no truth from him which I felt he should know, and that I desired him to send an appointment to this place, which he did. Before Elder Shidler arrived, the Methodists had a man by the name of Holiday on the ground, and preaching for them. He organized a

church of thirty members, and appointed Daugherty in the regular way the class leader for the church. When it was known that Elder Shidler was coming to hold a meeting, Mr. Daugherty went to all his members and told them they should not go to the "New Light" meeting, and that if they went to hear Shidler, he would take their names off the class book of the church. He told them that it was their duty to be Methodists, or nothing at all. The desire to have every man hear for himself clung to me, and I busied myself in circulating Elder Shidler's appointment, and succeeded in letting it be known for at least ten miles around. I was determined that he should have a hearing, and the result was all that I could desire, for he had a very large congregation of attentive listeners.

Upon his arrival I told him of all that had been said and done, and how the Methodists had forbidden their members under penalty of dismissal, to hear him, and advised him to "whale" them unmercifully.

To my utter astonishment and deep chagrin, he paid no manner of attention to what I said to him, and did not seem to be in sympathy with my feelings. At the meeting after he had sung and prayed according to the custom of that day, he announced his text as follows:

St. John 5:25. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the father has life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

He spoke clearly and concisely and with energy and power.

While he was speaking, a woman—Mrs. Stout—fell to the floor as though stricken with death. Her friends removed her from the room believing that she was really dead. They did all they could to revive her, but to no avail. They left her in the care of her immediate relatives and friends, believing her to have died. Later on she revived and immediately shouted forth the praises of God at the top of her voice, saying "Glory!" "Glory to God!" "I have found Jesus and I am happy in the Lord." When they heard her shouting, they would not have been more surprised or frightened had half the congregation fallen dead all at one time. So powerful was the preaching by Elder Shidler, that the

people seemed spellbound. He indeed wielded the sword of the Spirit with mighty force, and it cut both right and left. He indeed gave saint and sinner their portion in due season. He spoke of the awful threatenings of an offended God, told of the inevitable destiny of those who dared to raise their puny arm in rebellion against a just and holy God. He described the awful meaning of the denunciation, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity," and in persuasive voice and with gentle manner he told of God's love for a lost and ruined world, in that He sent His only begotten Son to die, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life; closing with the words, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and "Well done thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

At this meeting, the good work began in earnest. Elder Shidler could remain with us until Monday only, but he agreed to return on the following Thursday, which he did, and remained over the ensuing Sabbath during which time he organized a church of more than thirty members, fifteen of whom were young people who had been on probation in the Methodist Church. He did not say a word in his sermons, or in private conversation against

the Methodists, or any other body of believers. It may be seen from this event, that it did not help the Methodists at all to forbid their members attending the meeting of the "New Lights" but it did help the Christians, and one is inclined from such an outcome to think, that good may come of evil.

During this meeting I became better acquainted with the Christians, their doctrines, and the management of their Church, and I coincided with them in the most important points of theology. In a future chapter I shall give the difference between my views and those held by the Christians, which doctrines I have come to know by coming in contact with their preachers, and hearing the doctrine so often stated.

Falling in Love and What Came of It.

I suppose that my readers think that they are now to hear of how "Abe" Snethen and Miss Lottie Brown made love to each other going to that camp meeting. But if you are thus thinking, prepare at once for a disappointment for not a word or suggestion of the kind escaped either of us. In matrimonial and social matters, the customs of that day, were very different from what they are now. In those days, when a young man considered himself old enough to marry, and felt himself capable of supporting a family, he began looking carefully about him for a life companion, which in his judgment

would be suited to his likes and dislikes, as well as able to work in the fields or do other manual labor, if circumstances should demand it of her. He did not as now, send in his highly scented calling card, and announce the hour definitely, that he might be expected. Nor did he choose Sunday evening, as the time of his visit, either, but a time least expected by the young woman and under circumstances which would give him a very definite idea of what she was like in her everyday life.

As for dress, he had nothing better than a buckskin suit adorned with a hunting shirt, and a coonskin cap, and she her linsey woolsey. The way she received him, generally determined whether or not he would call again. The young man always made it a part of his love affairs, not to fall in love so deep that he could not fall out again, if necessary, so that he always made a thorough investigation before he allowed himself to become committed. If the girl upon whom he called received him kindly, and showed some respect for him, and took some interest in the hunting stories which he was sure to relate, then he would most certainly call another time, and still another, and so on until he was sure that she was the woman he wanted for his life companion, and would propose in the same straightforward way, that usually characterized the man of his day. But if she showed herself indifferent to his

call, or even intimated that he was not to her liking, he would bid her adieu and begone forever, so far as the question of matrimony was concerned. I think my girl readers are saying, "Well, if so much was at stake I think the girls would certainly have taken the hint, and always have been in their best dress, and on their best behavior." But not so, as now, many girls were careless of themselves, their homes, and their future, and for that reason, many of them missed the chance of their lives to marry and have homes of their own.

I want to say right here, that Miss Lottie Brown and I, never exchanged words of love, and never so far as I know, even thought of such a thing regarding each other. In those days we did not choose a wife for her looks alone, but as I have said, for her ability to work, and her willingness to be of help in the matters of the home. There was no parlor for the pretty things with face covered with paint and powder to occupy, as now, while the mother did the work. Fops were unknown, and girls had but little disposition to be other than just plain good women. When a young man found a girl who was willing to spin, weave, milk, churn, bake bread, and burn the brush in the clearing, and knew how to do such things, he knew that in her he could find a wife, and he generally proceeded to do so. About the time that I made up my mind to marry, feeling

that the time had come for me to quit my roving about and settle down, I met Miss Lydie Richards. I confess that I had been noticing her for some time before, and that her behavior suited me quite well. I came to the conclusion that with her, I would try my luck and try I did. I knew very well that if I did not try, I would never know, and I knew another thing, that if she refused me, I could try somewhere else. But she was a Methodist! The fact of her being a Methodist troubled me quite a little, I can assure you. I knew that their views of religion and mine were wide apart, and that there was no hope of them ever coming together. I confess that I felt a little uneasy, lest she might refuse me because I was not a Methodist. I made up my mind that I would go and ask her about it, and I can tell you honestly that it took more courage for me to do that, than to have faced a whole congregation of Methodists in a religious combat over the mode of baptism, or any other disputed question of our theology. But I went, and she received me kindly. I went again, and again. The more I went, the better I liked her, and the better I liked her, the more I went, and it came to be that it was a trial to me to await the time of going. My first thought was that she would make me a good wife, but later on I came to feel that this would be a dreary old world to live in without her, even though she were

a Methodist. Methodism in this case did not count for anything at all, for even with my Bible in hand, studying how to refute their doctrine, she would come into my mind, and stand before me as an angel of light. I did not know what it was that ailed me, but I found out bye and bye, that it was just old fashioned backwoods love, and that I loved that girl better than I did myself, my mother or any other person or thing on the face of God's earth; and Methodist "though she be," I must marry her or be miserable all my life. I did not forget to pray over the matter, and earnestly asked God that if it were not right for us to marry, to prevent it, but that if it was His will that we should become one, that we might live together in the gospel of love, and be happy here on the earth, and dwell together in heaven. Well—to make a long story short, we married. On the 14th day of May, 1814, we were married and though we differed in our religious views, and were uncompromising in our belief, yet no quarrel over them ever marred our peace, or disturbed our happiness. My wife was born in Essex County, New York, but left that state with her parents for Ohio, when she was but eleven years old, and where I met her when in her nineteenth year. She was a good scholar, a good reader, and was able and willing to help me in my studies, which she did, and thus proved a great blessing to

me in my ministerial life. She was a Christian in whom there was no guile, and gave much of her time to church work, and to the leading of sinners to Christ. Indeed she was what God designed a woman to be, a helpmate for man. We began housekeeping at once, and under very discouraging conditions, as we had so little with which to begin so important a matter. We moved into Montgomery County, Ohio, and here I began to preach in all earnestness, giving almost my entire time to the work of holding meetings. I met with severe trials and bitter opposition, but as Paul of old had said, so could I say "none of these things move me." One man swore that if I did not quit preaching, he would whip me. He went so far as to spit a mouthful of tobacco juice in my face, filling my eyes and mouth with the nasty stuff. I turned away, and wiping the filth out of my eyes, I took off my coat, and turned to give him a sound thrashing, which I knew I could do. I knew that I could thrash him blind in a very few seconds, but as I turned, I remembered that neither Christ nor the apostles, ever resented an insult, and that I was not better than they. I felt that the servant was not greater than his Lord, and so while this foul deed sorely vexed me, and severely tried my patience, I turned and walked away, and as I did so, I felt that I was bearing persecution for the Lord's sake, and was

glad then, and have been glad ever since, that I did not resent the insult.

Sometime before this occurred, my wife and I had been baptized by immersion. Elder George Shidler baptized us, and my wife united with the Christian Church, and she has remained in it, faithful and true, ever since. I continued to preach. Sometimes I had moccasins on my feet, and sometimes I was barefoot. I always wore home made clothes, for the reason that I was not able to get better ones. I had to preach in my homespun outfit, or not at all, and many times my wife washed my clothes while I was in bed, as I had but one suit, and had she not done this for me, I could not have gone to my appointments. There were but few preachers, and but little preaching done in the country at this time. I made a rule which I carefully followed, to preach in the most wicked places I heard of. The men usually brought their guns to church with them, and many times did they shoot at a mark while I would be preaching, and sometimes they would curse me to my face, calling me a wolf in sheep's clothing. On one occasion a man caught me by the throat and choked me so, that I was not able to preach for two weeks, and could scarcely talk during that time. A man whose name was Tokias Miller, saw the man choking me, and coming up to us, said to him, "Stop that or take a thrashing." He

loosed his grasp upon my throat, and I ran around the house and got away as fast as I could. After I had gotten away, Miller gave the man a sound thrashing, and afterward sent me word, that if I would come to Liberty, Montgomery County, I might preach in his house. Some of the men at Liberty said, I should not preach there and that if I tried it, they would take me out and "finkle" me, which meant that they would whip me with white thorns. I sent an appointment, and arrived at Liberty in time to fill it, but found that they had arranged to hold the meeting two miles out in the country. I then left another appointment for Miller's, which I filled according to agreement. The rowdies did not interrupt me much while I was preaching, but they cut the bed cords of the bed in the room in which I preached.

Wherever I heard of a place where they refused to have preaching, there I sent an appointment, and there I turned up ready for meeting, when the time arrived and the more they threatened me, the more sure I was to go.

How I Came to be Called the Barefoot Preacher.

About this time I lost some horses, and started out to search for them. I had heard of a meeting that was to be held by the Christians, and made up my mind to attend it, but must needs find my

horses first, for if I did not, by the time the meeting should close, they would be so far away, I would not be likely to ever find them. When I left home to go in search of the lost horses, I had on a very old and badly worn suit of clothes, a straw hat that my mother had made for me, and which had done service for several years and a pair of old moccasins. In this garb I plodded on for a long time, thinking as I went, that I would certainly hear of my lost horses, but I did not.

After awhile my moccasins wore out, and I threw them away, and trudged on in my bare feet. Hearing of a meeting in Warren County, I went there, hoping to hear some word of my horses. When I arrived at the meeting, I was as I suppose in appearance a veritable "scarecrow" and they would not let me preach. I know I must have appeared unfit for the pulpit. Shabby in dress, worn and weary—barefoot and almost hatless, covered with dust and a woe-begone appearance in general, was the sight they beheld when they saw me, and I cannot blame them much for not wanting me to preach. The preachers very frankly told me that the people did not want such a looking man to preach, for which I could not blame them, but yet I wanted to preach. I arrived on the campground on Friday, and hung around until Sunday, by which time I had gotten so full of preach that I could not keep still.

On Sunday morning, the ministers held a consultation about who should preach at that hour, and who should follow, for it was the custom then, that if two ministers were present, one of them should preach, and the other follow. As I stood and listened, I heard them one after the other, making excuse and insisting that some one else do the preaching, or the exhorting. I wondered why they sought to be excused. Had they felt as I did, they would have wanted to preach. I also wished that they would invite me to preach, and with such thoughts in my mind I ran onto the platform, and told them that I would preach.

I suppose that my sudden and wholly unexpected appearance on the stand, seeing how I was arrayed, for certainly Solomon in all his glory never looked like me—so dumbfounded the preachers, that they did not recover from the surprise or come to their senses in time to drive me from the stand, and so I got to preach. I commenced by calling attention to the humiliation of true religion and sustained my remarks by reciting incidents in the life of Christ; among them in particular was the event of His riding into Jerusalem on the crooked-legged ass, and how the people despised His appearance, and yet this Christ was King of kings and Lord of lords. The people were deeply affected. The spirit of the Lord came down upon us, and a mighty stirring

there was amid the dry bones. Some wept, others fell prostrate to the ground, some shouted aloud the praise of God in mighty Hosannahs, and the entire congregation arose to their feet, and moved toward the stand. In the midst of this most wonderful scene, Elder Dooley's father lifted up his hands, and cried aloud, saying "Oh God, send us more barefoot preachers." Ever after this I was known as the barefoot preacher. This was a great change for me, for prior to this I had not associated very much with the preachers, but preaching as I had, almost always alone; but from this time on I was with the preachers a great deal during our public meetings. From this circumstance they were made to see that the people thought more of me than they had supposed.

Some time after this, Elders George Shidler, John Williams, and myself, held a camp meeting together. During the meeting, Elder Childers, a Presbyterian preacher, came to us, and asked the privilege of preaching. After a little consultation, we decided to give him the privilege of preaching, and the hour for him was appointed. He took for his text these words, "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold, them I must bring, and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." "The first sheep mentioned" said he, "are the elect of the Jews, and the second, are the elect of the Gentiles." His sermon was one of the

Snethen's Certificate of Ordination

We do certify that at a public meeting held on Twin-
creek in the county of Preble & State of Ohio on the
17th Day of June 1823. Abraham Snethen was
solemnly ordained & set apart to the Gospel mini-
stry Done by order of conference.

David Rorer
George Shidelor } Elders

strongest I ever heard from that text. The next day he returned and requested that he be given an hour in which to conclude the sermon begun the day before. We concluded to allow him the privilege, and he did his best, to prove predestinarianism. He said that God gave a general call, but that man could not come until God gave him a special call, and he gave that call only to the elect, and then the elect had to come. They could go to balls, or to grog shops, anywhere, they still could not get rid of the call. It was like a harpoon fastened in a whale, the whale might flounder and dive into the deep sea, the harpoon would only work deeper, and the whaler would not let it go until he had got it on board his vessel. He said that it was so with the special call to the sinner—it would not let him go until it landed him in heaven.

He informed us that there was not one word of encouragement in the Bible for those who did not belong to the elect. He said that Jesus Christ trod the wine press of the wrath of Almighty God, instead of the elect, and they only. And that Christ died for none others. If we were not of the elect we could not be saved. but must be damned world without end! And then looking over the congregation, he said: "I pity you, poor sinner!"

When he said that, I almost cried, "Well you are more merciful toward us than you tell us your Lord is."

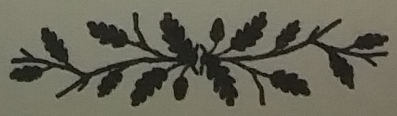
When he had closed his discourse, we held a consultation as to who should follow him. Elder Shidler and Elder Williams positively refused to address the congregation after it had listened to such a harangue, and gave it over to me, if I felt like doing it.

After thinking it over for a few minutes, I arose and said to the congregation that I was forced to take the part of Jesus and His cause, against the views that my brother had advanced, and that I might as well do it openly and boldly first as last, as they must sooner or later know my position upon the subject. I chose for my text the following words: "Give ear, O ye heavens and I will speak; And hear O earth the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Deut. 32:1, 2, 3, 4.

While I was preaching, the gloom that had previously settled down upon an overwrought people,

began to give way, and the loud amens were distinctly heard everywhere throughout the entire congregation. During this expression of approval, quite a number of the audience rose to their feet, and coming hastily to the stand, raised me above their heads and carrying me around about the audience, cried at the top of their voices "Victory! Victory! Glory to God in the Highest!" From this time on I was no more left alone but was invited to preach in every place, where the Christians held meetings, and the ministers of the Church took me to their hearts in great confidence and affection.

This camp-meeting was held at Still River in Miami County, Ohio.



CHAPTER NINE

MY FIRST HOME.

My first home after my marriage, was in Montgomery County, Ohio. While living here I preached all I could under the circumstances which surrounded me. I was poor, and had a family to support, which duty I regarded as sacred, and always and ever, to the best of my ability, did I meet that obligation. I owned no home or land, and had to work by the day for what we needed. The ministers of this time did not receive much for their service. The people were all poor alike, and but few had more than they needed for their actual wants. After I had lived in Montgomery County awhile, I determined to settle on some land in the wilderness, and far enough inland, to secure me against the invasion of any who might want to enter available lands, and thus cause me to move. I saw that if I had land of my own, that when I could not get work for wages, I could employ my time clearing my own land, and this I did. The country was "settling up" so fast that I was often compelled to go a long distance from home in order to obtain employment. After a hard day's work I would return home, and work far into the night on my own "claim." My

wife worked with me, gathering the brush, and burning it, so as to make it light enough for me to see to work.

We were blessed with two children at this time, which we always took with us to our work, and when they would get sleepy my wife would wrap them up in a large quilt which she always took to the field for that purpose. I made my wife a loom, and many were the days that she would sit and weave and sing, all day long, and often far into the night, when not helping me in the clearing. We were as happy as mortals ever can be, and while we were necessitated to work hard, and live saving, we enjoyed what we had, and thankfully and lovingly pressed on in our daily duties. When working away from home, I always left early in the morning, and seldom returned until after nightfall, and sometimes it would be late in the night when I reached home. When traveling after night, I most always carried a torch of hickory bark, which not only enabled me to see my way, but with it I could protect myself from the wolves, for at that time the wolves abounded in great numbers everywhere, and would, when hungry attack a man, and woe be to the hapless fellow if he had no means of defense. They were afraid of the light, and one was comparatively safe, as long as his torches glared in the darkness. Their glittering eyes, their skulking forms,

and their hungry hideous yelp were not very comforting greetings to the benighted and helpless traveler. My work was that of clearing land, which I undertook to do by the acre, and many of these contracts took me so far from home, that of necessity I was out very late. Besides the work I did on my own land, and preaching also every Saturday and Sunday, and many funerals in the interval, I cleared and made ready for the plow no less than one hundred and twenty-five acres of land, in fifteen years. In those days a man was compelled to be brave; the circumstances and conditions of pioneer life makes bravery inevitable, and though not born to hardship or danger, one soon becomes inured to them, as the following incidents may show.

I remember that one Saturday night, when my week's work was finished, I started with a glad heart toward my cabin in the wilderness. I fell to thinking of my precious wife, and babies. I had been gone a week, and I did not know what might have befallen them during my absence. They were exposed to all the dangers of the wilderness, for it was then that we heard the scream of the panther, the howl of the wolf, the hiss of the serpent, and even the warwhoop of the Indian. I had worked two days for a peck of salt, and was glad to get it even at that price, for it was hard to obtain, but very necessary to have, as we all know. The man

for whom I had been working, had a little dog that followed me homeward. I had gone about half the distance, when some wild hogs attacked the dog. He ran to me for protection, which caused the hogs to make toward me, and in their savage, vicious natures, they would have quickly finished their work had they gotten hold of me. I had in my hand a stout cane, with which I defended myself the best I could, but it being very dark in the woods, I having had to give up my torch in order to better use my cudgel, so that I made but little headway at driving them off. I fought them until near midnight, and when well nigh exhausted, and expecting every minute to be overcome and torn to pieces, I fell against a tree, that had been blown up by the roots. I was not long in climbing out upon the roots of the tree beyond the reach of the savage beasts, and thus my life was saved, and that too from a horrible death. However, before I got beyond their reach, they had absolutely torn every shred of my trousers from my body, and my legs were so gnashed and torn by their teeth, that I was laid up for several days. Of course, I lost my salt, and the poor dog was devoured by the hogs, and I camped, or more truly roosted on the roots of the tree until near morning, for though the hogs had disappeared, yet I was afraid to risk my life among them again while it was dark, and so stayed out

of their reach until it was light enough for me to see.

On another occasion I came near losing my life. I had gone quite a distance from home to help a neighbor by the name of Jake Tillman, butcher a hog. It was late in the evening when the work was completed, and I got started homeward. I had a half hog on my back, and had gotten within calling distance of the house when the wolves which had scented the meat, began to howl all around me. I had not forgotten my experience with the wild hogs, and knew from that, what I might expect from the wolves. I bent every energy, and ran with all my might toward the house, for I was anxious to save my meat as well as my life, but I soon found that I could not save both, and possibly neither. The woods seemed full of wolves, as it had of wild hogs on the night they attacked me. I threw my meat to them, and hoped they would stop to eat it and thus allow me to escape, but in that I was disappointed for among so many there was scarcely a bite apiece for them, and so while a few stopped to quarrel over the meat, and devour it, the main pack pursued me. It was indeed a race for life, with the odds greatly in favor of the wolves. I chanced to run against a sapling and at once saw the means of my deliverance. I climbed the sapling in a twinkling, but not before the wolves had torn one leg of my pants off,

and had bitten me severely. Although out of reach of the wolves, I soon found that I was not out of danger, for the sapling was too slender to bear my weight, and when the wind would sway the sapling to and fro, my weight almost carried me within reach of the hungry, howling pack, at its roots. I gathered the limbs of the sapling together, and taking a buckskin belt, which I wore about my waist, I belted the limbs about me, thus making myself a part of the tree, so that my weight was not so unevenly balanced, and by this means I again saved my life, and that too, as before, from an unspeakably horrible death. No sooner had I secured my own safety, than I realized the danger to my wife, for I well knew that the howling devils, would soon leave me, and assault the cabin. I cried at the top of my voice, which rose above the din of the yelping pack, and my wife hearing, responded. I told her that I was in a tree, and safe enough, and that she must bar the door, and do it quickly, too, for the whole pack would soon set off for the house, which they did, and with a dismal howl which chilled the blood in my veins, but my wife had acted quickly, and the pack came up against a door securely barred. I stayed in the tree until daylight. It was a very cold night, and with all my effort to keep from freezing, I only partially succeeded, for at break of day when the wolves slunk back into the gloom of the

forest, my wife came out to help me down, I found that I was quite badly frozen, and actually stiff from the cold. We did not fail to thank God for our deliverance, and though our meat was gone, and I well nigh frozen to death, and my wife had spent a sleepless, anxious night, not knowing but that I had fallen from the sapling, and had been devoured, yet we were alive, we had each other and the children, and that was enough to call forth our gratitude and praise.

It may be of interest to my readers to know how we got our clothes. There were then no ready-made clothing, no tailors, and indeed no manufactured cloth of any kind; at least none that we had heard of in our wilderness home. Well, we raised the flax, then prepared it by a process called braking, scutching, hackling, carding, and spinning. After the thread had been thus prepared, the women wove it into linen cloth, and after it went through a process of bleaching, it was then ready to be made into garments, which we thought to be very nice indeed. When we put on our "bleached shirts" in those days, we felt as fine as the men do now in their stiffly starched ones. Our shirts and our trousers were made from the same bolt of goods, so that if we had on fine shirts, we had on fine trousers, too. In those days the worth of a man was not determined by what he had on, but by what

he could do in the way of work and the help he could render when needed.

For themselves, the women would spin the thread very fine, and weave the cloth very smooth, and make themselves white dresses, and in them, plain though they were, with their honest eyes, rosy red cheeks, pure faces, and innocent lives, they were veritable queens, and worthy of the knights of the woods, which many of them got for husbands. Later on in our development, we secured both black and white sheep, and sometimes we would color the white wool with walnut bark, and weaving it with black, made what was then called "mixed jeans." A man able to wear a suit of "mixed jeans" was considered quite prosperous indeed; but so far as I know, such prosperity did not affect the manners nor usefulness of their possessors. We were common people, with common needs, and a common desire to help. We had but little, and we knew how that little came, and hence we knew the value of it. I feel quite sure that we enjoyed life in those days better than we do now, and I think for the reason, that we now have so much and it comes to us so easily, that we lack appreciation and gratitude. No heart can be happy unless it is appreciative and thankful.

CHAPTER TEN

SETTLING THE LIQUOR QUESTION.

During the year 1820, the country filled up quite rapidly with men, who like myself were seeking homes. Others who were mere adventurers settled within our territory, and still some others who came among us for spoil only. I was yet a young man, but my life had been filled with strange and seemingly contradictory experiences. There were about twenty families in all in the settlement, to whom I preached as I had opportunity. It was a custom in the neighborhood to have log-rollings, barn-raisings, wood-choppings and other gatherings of like character, to which all the people of the settlement would be invited. At these neighborhood wood-choppings, the brush would be piled in heaps, and the logs rolled together, that they both might be burned. Some would chop wood, others cut logs, and others pick and pile the brush, and still others roll the logs into great piles and heaps, and in this way the work was carried on, and the land cleared. It was a time-honored custom, when one was to have a neighborhood gathering of any kind, to invite all the people in the settlement to come and help, to provide plenty of whisky for the men, and a big

dinner for all. When my turn came for a wood-chopping and log-rolling, I conformed to the custom, and invited all my neighbors, provided the whiskey, and my wife prepared the dinner. About all the men in the settlement came to my log-rolling, and they worked well for a short time, but soon the most of them were under the influence of liquor. In those days we called it getting "tipsy." Under the influence of the whiskey they did miserably poor work. They piled the brush in a hap-hazard, topsy-turvy way, and left the logs a foot or more apart. Of course, they could not be burned this way. I might have known better than to have had whiskey at my wood-chopping, but I didn't. I had, when I was converted, solemnly resolved, never to drink whiskey, or any other thing that would intoxicate, but I supposed that I would be justified in having it at this neighborhood gathering, because everybody else did; and then, I hoped that in some way, good might come out of it. But at this log rolling, I made up my mind, to never again have whiskey or any other intoxicating drink, at any log-rolling, wood-chopping, house-raising, nor in any harvest field of mine; and furthermore I resolved, to do all in my power to persuade my neighbors to do likewise. I was well aware that I should meet with strong opposition from nearly every one of my neighbors, but feeling it wrong to drink, and

wrong to have intoxicating liquors at these public gatherings, I felt it my duty to do all in my power to get my neighbors and friends to stop using it. I told my wife of the resolution I had made. As I knew full well before I told her that she would uphold me in all, and so she did; not only in sympathy, but in real service, which counted much for our undertaking. She suggested, that I should talk to the men, and she would talk to the women, which proved a very wise thing to do. After we had talked the matter over at some length, and had our plans pretty well matured, we knelt down and asked the Lord's help and blessing, both of which we received. We knew that we had undertaken a difficult task, and that if we succeeded, we would have a hard battle to fight, but we felt ourselves in the right, and knew that many were on the road to ruin, and that we must do our best to save them, and that unless we did, God would hold us responsible for their ruin, at least to the extent of our opportunity and ability. It was a part of our plan, to have another wood-chopping, and log-rolling, as soon as it came our turn. When in the course of time it fell to our lot to have the neighbors come in and help us, we made every preparation, except to provide the whiskey. We determined to open the battle at once, for we knew that the plan would either succeed, or fail, when tested by a neighborhood gather-

ing, and then we reasoned, that if we waited until the chopping and rolling season was over for that year, we could do nothing until the next regular season came around. The day for our chopping and rolling was appointed, and my wife let it be known that a quilt would be ready on that day, and all the women would be invited to the quilting. I went all over the neighborhood announcing the day for my chopping, and invited all the people to be present. I told the men to be sure and have their wives come with them, as my "old woman" would have a "quilt in," and they must help her get it out. I told them very frankly, that there would be no liquor in the clearing, and that I never would have anything of the kind again on my premises, and that if they could not come and chop wood and roll logs for me under such conditions, I should have to go on without them, and that I would chop my own wood, and roll my own logs. Some of them told me plainly, that they would not come, nor would they ever help any man, who would not have whiskey for them. They let me know that they had their opinion of a man who would want his neighbors to come in and work for him, and not furnish them liquor to drink. I tried to show these neighbors of mine, that it was wrong to drink, and that the habit once formed meant death to both body and soul. I assured them, that we would have

plenty to eat, and a good time, and asked them to come and try it once anyway without whiskey, and see how it would pan out. Upon leaving them, I would insist upon them bringing their wives with them, saying I did not want my wife disappointed, and she would be, if they did not come. When I reached home I reported to my wife what I had said, and what had been said to me. "Never mind," was her cheery reply, "everything will be all right, and we will have a good time." She always had a cheerful, hopeful spirit, and believed that the best would always come. When the day set for our wood-chopping and log-rolling came, the most of our neighbors and their wives reported for duty.

I had not burned the log heaps of the previous gathering, and there they were, just as they had been left by the "tipsy" fellows some months before. I had left them for the reasons that they would not burn unless rolled together, and that when those who left them that way, saw them, they would then see how they had done their work while drunk.

I thought this might have a good effect, and it did. When we arrived in that part of the clearing where the work had been so poorly done, I said, "Boys, I would like to have some of the strongest of you, to help me 'fix up' these heaps, for I do not think they will burn as they are."

I had a reason for saying the "strongest" which was, that there were two young married men in the company who were the strongest men in the neighborhood, and they drank more whiskey too, than any other two men in the settlement. They were likewise newcomers in the settlement. When I announced my request, all the men stopped, and stood looking at the log-heaps. Some of them said, that it was a shame they had been drunk on the former occasion, and that such miserable work had been done by them. One of the young men, said he would help me fix up the log-heaps before he did anything else, and called upon all others of like mind, to fall in and help him. Every man present announced, not only his willingness, but his determination to help rebuild the heaps, and thus as far as possible undo what had been previously done. It took us nearly all the forenoon to rebuild these heaps, during which time I never said a word about the bad work of the other rolling. When we were through with this part of the work, they asked me if what they had done was satisfactory, and I cried out so that all might hear, "Well done! Well done!" The young man who had first volunteered to help in rebuilding the heaps, came to me and asked my pardon assuring me that he would never get so drunk again as to make him a fool. From that moment on until dinner, each man did his best at chopping,

or rolling, or picking, or at whatever he might be doing.

We were all ready for dinner, and welcomed most gladly the call to come and eat. Soon after we were seated at the table, some of the ladies asked, why we had not been chopping wood, saying that if we had been, we had been doing it very quietly, for they had not heard us. The men all looked at me, and seemed to plead for a defense, but I was so hungry that I did not hear what was being said. Seeing that I was not going to help them out, they fell to looking at each other. Presently I looked up, and saw the young man, who had made the promise not to get drunk again. standing up as he said, "to make it impressive." He said, "Ladies, I will tell you why you did not hear any more chopping this morning than you did. When we were here before, we all got drunk, and did not half do our work, so that we spent almost all the forenoon in doing our work over again. We left the heaps so they would not burn, and we have been fixing them up so they would. "To be plain about it" said he, "we were straightening out what whiskey had made crooked." He then sat down, and for a moment there was silence, excepting for the sound of the grinding, and that was low. It was then, that my wife did her part of the work. She seemed to be waiting for just this opportunity. She said, "Mr.

Brown, don't you think it would be much better to leave the whiskey out of these neighborhood gatherings?" This question gave rise to quite an argument concerning the use of liquor at the wood-choppings, and log-rollings. I saw from the turn things had taken, and the temper displayed in the arguments, that the men would get mad, and that we would have trouble on our hands and so I proposed that the subject be left for the women to talk over during the afternoon, and that they should tell us their decision when we came to supper. That seemed to suit everybody, and nothing more was said upon that subject. When we came in to supper, the men were impatient to hear what the women had decided to do.

Mr. Brown supposed that they would decide according to my idea, seeing as he said that I was a preacher. I told him, that I felt sure that they would decide rightly. No sooner had we seated ourselves at the table, when one of the men asked the women how they had decided the matter of whiskey or no whiskey at the rollings. The women answered that they had concluded if they could get along at home without whiskey, that they ought to get along without it at their gatherings. Some of the women dissented from the expressed opinion, and said, they would have whiskey at all their "doings" and that those who did not want to drink

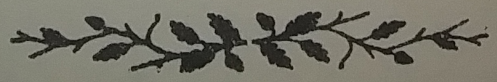
it could let it alone, and that would leave more for those who would want it. I told them that for myself, I would help them all alike, whether they had whiskey or whether they did not, for I wanted to live in peace with all my neighbors. There was present a man, who was a very hard drinker. He was known as the hardest drinker in the neighborhood. He was often drunk, and when drunk he never failed to beat his wife and drive her from the house. When all had spoken upon the question who expressed a desire to speak, his wife went to him and putting her hand on his shoulder, said, "Mr. Phillips which side are you going to join? He looked at her most intently for fully a minute before he spoke, and when he did speak he said, "Ellen, you know what I would like to do." Then turning to the men, he continued in an earnest tone, "Men, you all know me, and you all know that I get drunk, and that when drunk, I am a fool, a cruel brute; you all know that I abuse my wife most shamefully, and treat my children cruelly every time I get drunk. You know that the devil gets into me every time that whiskey does, and you all know, too, that I have as good a wife as any man ever had, patient, kind, and forbearing, even when I treat her meaner than a brute ever ought to be treated, and I am going to leave it to her whether or not we shall have whiskey at our

rollings. But for myself, I do not want to go to a gathering, where they have whiskey." This speech ended the argument, and the men all went home in a good humor, after having done a good day's work for me. Wife and I thought we had gained a great victory, for we had gained Mr. Brown and wife, and Mr. Phillips and wife, to our way of thinking; Mr. Brown going so far as to say, that he would not have whiskey at any of his "doin's." He told us of his coming stable-raising, and invited us all to come, but told us very plainly, he would not have whiskey.

When the day came for the stable-raising at Mr. Brown's, wife and I went, my wife to help in the house, and I with the raising. There were not many at the raising, but the stable went up, and that, too, in good order and without accident, a very unusual thing when whiskey was used. I urged the men not to be discouraged. telling them that we were in the right, and that *right was might*, and would surely win. From this beginning there came to be two parties in the settlement, one for whiskey, and one for temperance.

There were more log-rollings, wood-choppings, and house-raisings this year, than any previous year of my acquaintance in the settlement. Those of us who were against having whiskey at the gatherings, would help both parties, and some of the

whiskey side would help us, and some would not, but we who would not furnish whiskey always got the most work done, and done in much better order too, and then our side was noted for not having any quarrels or fights. These facts became known and felt throughout the entire neighborhood, and they had a good influence, for before a year had gone by, we had more than two-thirds of the entire population of our settlement on the side of temperance, and in less than three years from that spring, it was a rare thing to have whiskey at any neighborhood gathering, and those who did have it, were ashamed to let it be known, for by this time public sentiment and sympathy were against its presence and use at any kind of public meetings.



CHAPTER ELEVEN

CLEANING WHEAT.

Notwithstanding the hardships of pioneer life, and the difficulty of getting a living in the wilderness, I did not despair, or give up preaching. I had one appointment in a settlement a good long distance from my home. On one occasion my brother William accompanied me to this appointment. We traveled on foot, for the reason that it was about all the way we could travel, and it was also safer and more pleasant than riding horseback. On our way we came to a house at which we stopped to rest. These houses in the wilderness were cabins, built of logs, the ends only being flattened so that they could be joined together. They all had puncheon floors. These puncheon floors were made by splitting logs eighteen or more inches in diameter, hewing the flat side smooth, and laying them alongside each other with the round side down. In the center of the floor, four auger holes were bored, in which stakes were fastened. On these, two puncheons were placed, and this made the pioneer's table. Four other auger holes were bored in the corner of the cabin, in which were driven four stakes with forked tops. In these, saplings

are laid, on which rest strips of bark or in their place, buffalo skins are tightly drawn. Dried leaves are now gathered and spread upon the puncheons, or skins, and a bed is complete and ready for use. In another corner of the cabin, a rude dresser is made in which the little stock of pottery, tin, and ironware are placed. Three or four, three-legged stools to be followed in after years, by a dozen or twenty as might be needed, and in course of time, a sugar trough for a cradle.

In the more elaborately furnished homes, a set of buck horns would be found over the door, serving instead of the ordinary pegs on which the trusty rifle rested. In nearly all these log cabin homes, one would find a loom, for each wife was expected to bring to her husband a spinning wheel as her dower. Humble indeed, were these households of our first settlers, but around these cabin homes in the wilderness, God's angels came to bestow their benedictions. Here was found health, and labor, frugality and contentment, chastity and love. From these darkened fountains in the forest, have gushed the waters which, flowing into sunshine, have combined to form the majestic river of our national life. The dwellers in these wilderness homes, were men and women who for the most part came to subdue the land and replenish it. They came with that unerring sagacity to discover and settle the

choice lands of the country. With stalwart strength, intrepid hearts, high resolves, and unconquerable wills, they came to dispossess the redskin, and claim the land as a heritage for civilization. They came to win from forest battle, toil and self-denial, homes for their families, and a kingdom for coming generations. These hunter-farmers, recognized themselves as citizens, and labored long and well to lay the foundation of coming states. Laws were passed, and at once promptly and duly enforced. It sometimes happened that Judge Lynch occupied the bench and that regulators were the Jury. But how could it be otherwise, when the nearest constable was a hundred miles away, and the only police officer in the country, was the rifle at the saddle pummel or flung across the hunter's shoulder; when the courthouse was the largest tree within sight, and the only jail, a rope thrown over the lowest branch, the culprit's neck in a noose at one end, and strong arms tugging away at the other. It was not my purpose to describe so accurately the home and its inhabitants, but it is done, and no doubt will enable my readers to more clearly see the class of men and the conditions of the times in which many men spent not only their young lives, as did I, but never knew any other. At the home at which we stopped there was a man cleaning wheat. We cut our grain with a sickle, and

threshed it out with a flail. The flail consisted of a wooden staff or handle, at the end of which a stouter and shorter pole, or club was fastened, with a strip of strong buckskin and hung so as to swing easily and freely. Spreading the unthreshed grain on a hard piece of ground which had been made ready by cleaning it off, and tramping it down, we took hold of the long end, or handle of the flail, and swinging it over our heads let it fall on the heads of the wheat. One skilled in flailing could keep the swing going very rapidly and in a little while could thresh out quite a quantity of grain, but woe be to the man when he first undertook to flail, for unless he was very careful, he would thresh his own head instead of the wheatheads-. After it had been thus beaten out, it was run through a riddle and then put into a sheet and two men taking hold of the corners of the sheet would toss the wheat up and down in rapid motions, and thus fan all the chaff out of it. I saw that the men did not know how to handle the sheet, so brother William and I went over to where they were, and offered to help them a while. Our offer was accepted and we took hold of the sheet, and soon had all the wheat cleaned.

Upon leaving them, I said we must be on our way as I had an appointment to fill that night, and asked the men if they had heard of the meet-

ings, and the preachers. They said they had heard of the meetings, but that they never attended such gatherings, as they did not believe in them. "Well," said I, "this is my meeting, and I try to preach the truth, and I would like very much to have you come and hear me preach." The men looked at me very earnestly, and seemed somewhat astonished. "Why, are you a preacher?" one of them exclaimed. "I am indeed," said I, "and this is my appointment," I repeated. "Then I'll swear I'll go and hear you preach. If you can preach as well as you can clean wheat, you will be able to fan the sins out of a man in about a minute," and he grinned out the satisfaction he felt in saying what he had.

I told him that I could not save a man, nor forgive his sins, but that I tried to preach the truth as God had revealed it in the Bible. The man told me that he would come on Sunday and bring his family with him, and try to get others to come too. He was as good as his word, and prompt to his promise, he was there with his family and the entire neighborhood also. I preached from Matthew 13:3-9. "And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they

had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The congregation was large, and I felt the power and presence of the Holy Spirit upon me, and my words had a powerful effect upon the people, so much so, that many wept over their sins, some cried aloud for mercy, and still others, who shouted Glory! Glory! Glory to God!

The man whose wheat we had cleaned, came to me, and said, "Well sir, you can preach as well as clean wheat!" "I never," said he, "heard a cleaner sermon in all my life. I believe that you have preached the truth." The man's name was Caperon.

The meeting above mentioned was held on Ludlow Creek where we organized a church of twenty-five members, and this man Caperon and his wife, were of the members. When I first settled in Montgomery County, Ohio, it was a wilderness as heretofore described. Here I cleared land, and the money I earned I invested in government claims. I received for clearing land "18 inches and under," from five to eight dollars an acre. I borrowed enough money from one John Tillman, to pay for

eighty acres of land. He let me have the money one year without interest. When the money was due I was unable to pay it back. I went to Brother Israel Duncan and told him the facts about it; that I owed Brother Tillman one hundred dollars, and that I could not pay him. Brother Duncan loaned me one hundred dollars for one year without interest, and with this I paid Brother Tillman the money due him, and from that time on for six years, I borrowed one hundred dollars each year, and paid the brother from whom I had last borrowed the money. At the end of six years I was able to pay the note and thus free myself from debt.

From 1818, until 1836, I traveled and preached in Montgomery, Warren, Union, Darke, and adjoining counties of Ohio, and the Lord abundantly blessed my labors, for I saw hundreds of souls converted, and added to the membership of the Christian Church.

As from this viewpoint, I look backward to those early scenes and labors, I feel satisfied that I did my best, and that the Lord graciously blessed me. My conscience is clear and I am willing to leave it to the "Judge of all the earth," for, "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Had I written my life in detail, I should have told of the hardships, the persecutions, and the trials which came to me, all of which I tried to

endure for Christ's sake. I traveled on foot, through rain and snow, cold and heat, mud and dust, crossed swollen rivers and creeks, at the risk of my life, that I might reach my appointments. I had made it a rule never to disappoint, no matter what might be in the way. It was my habit to go, if I had to walk, swim swollen streams, face danger from wild beasts or cold weather; nothing, absolutely nothing, has ever kept me from meeting my appointments. Sun and storm were alike unable to prevent me from going where duty called me. Of course I carried the time-honored "saddle bags" in which I had a change of linen, my Bible and hymn book. The change of linen was often imaginary and when real, the linen was very coarse having been made from flax spun and woven by the hands of my wife.

One time I was preaching in Darke County, Ohio, and had sent an appointment quite a distance from where I was at the time, holding meetings. As it required two days' travel to reach the place, I was compelled to stop over night on the road. I was on horseback, and rode up to a house, and cried out in the usual fashion, Hello! Hello the house! A man came to the door of whom I inquired if I could stay all night there, and was promptly told I could not; that they would not keep strangers. It was very dark and I made up my mind, that

unless they put me out of the house I would stay there all night no matter what they said. I noticed the grass in the pasture field was very short and thin, and that a coating of hickory leaves had fallen over it. Into this field I deliberately turned my horse and all he had to eat that night was gathered from that mixture of short grass and hickory leaves. The man and his wife were very much out of humor, and for some reason the woman was especially so.

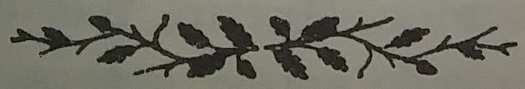
She was cross, and crabbed in her replies to my questions, and did not want to get me any supper, and very bluntly said as much. Indeed she did not want me there, and did not hesitate to let me know it. We sat and talked in a listless way, while all the time I was wondering whether or not I should go to bed without supper.

I finally concluded that I would tell them that I was a preacher, and introduced what I wanted to say by asking them if they ever had preaching in that neighborhood, and was told that once in a while they did. This reply was made in such an offhand way as to convince me of their absolute indifference to religious matters. In the course of the conversation upon the question of religion, the woman said there was one preacher of whom she had heard so much, that she would be glad to see him. I turned to her and said, "And what preacher is that?" Imagine my surprise when she promptly

replied, "Why the barefoot preacher." This somewhat embarrassed me, for I was in no way prepared for the reply she gave to my question. I had not thought that I was known, or that anything I had ever said or done, was worthy of remembrance. But while I was astonished beyond measure, I was also filled with a deep, sweet joy, for had not my Heavenly Father prepared the way for me, and had He not acknowledged me worthy of remembrance by so doing? To her expressed desire to see the "barefoot preacher" I made no reply, and my silence seemed to attract their attention, and they asked me if I had ever seen or heard of the fellow? I said yes, I had met him, and that if they would look at me, they would see the man the people called the "barefoot preacher." I then related to them how I came to be called the "barefoot preacher," and was careful not to leave out any item of the circumstance which had given to me the honorable distinction. They were very much astonished, and seemed greatly pleased, as their broad grins fully testified. I felt that I was welcome. The man in a most hearty way slapped me on the knee and said, "And you are the barefoot preacher! Well! Well! We did not expect this, did we wife! Well! Well!" The woman sat still and stared at me, somewhat to my embarrassment, and yet I secretly enjoyed their amazement, and I suppose my distinction, too.

Finally the woman seemed to recover from her astonishment, and said in the good old-fashioned voice of backwoods hospitality, "You haven't been to supper, have you?" I smiled and told her I had not. Well, she fairly jumped to her feet and said, "You shall soon have some," and in a very little while I was seated at a good warm supper, which I most thoroughly enjoyed. After talking until very late into the night, and promising to preach for them at the first opportunity, I retired to rest, truly thankful for the blessings and experiences of the day. Sometime after this I preached in this settlement and organized a church. This was not the only time that my "nick-name" saved me trouble and secured for me lodging and favors. It often occurred, that because I was the "barefoot preacher" I received consideration that otherwise would have been denied me. Those were indeed days of hardship and service. The ministers of that day were men of nerve, and purpose. I call to mind Elders Purviance, Gardner, McLane, Walters, Long, Simonton, Martin, Worley, Dearth, Shidler, Williams, and many others, who were all straight, heroic souls in the warfare against sectarianism and sin. These all were sorely persecuted by the sectarian churches, and for no other reason than that they preached salvation from sin, and that not through sectarianism. Most of the

ministers were poor, and none had very much, but to them the truth was everything, and life and personal ease nothing when compared with it. We received but little, and much of the time nothing at all for our work, yet we preached and God blessed our service, and sinners were saved. When I look back to the country as it then was: the wilderness, the rifle, the ax, and the saddle bags, and then see it as it now is, with its churches, schools, and commerce, I can but be happy in the progress which has marked the pathway of right from then until now, and I personally rejoice that in those early days, I was one of the "poor despised New Lights" as they were pleased to call us.



CHAPTER TWELVE

THE ADVENT OF THE CAMPBELLITES.

During the years 1831-32 and 33 the followers of Alexander Campbell, came into that part of Ohio in which I was then living, and began preaching what they were pleased to call "THE NEAR WAY TO HEAVEN," though it seemed to me to be more a water way than any other.

They had the three steps to the throne, on the end of their tongues about all the time, and you would always hear them declare that faith, repentance, and baptism, was the gospel order. Their preachers were restless, and anxious for debates. They were always busy in a way to confuse the minds of those who were really anxious to find the Lord. In our revival work, they would tell the people that all was wrong; that it was undue excitement, and that they felt it their duty as representatives of the right way of salvation, to oppose the way we did. Their plan of salvation made it so easy to be saved, and their theory seemed so plausible and to the uninformed, so reasonable and biblical, that many members of other churches, including the Christian were induced to leave the churches to which they belonged, and identify themselves with the new

movement. Of all the ministers, those of the Christians had the hardest time with these so-called reformers. These Campbellite preachers, professed to take the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice, and to plead for union upon its teachings alone, and the Christians standing upon the very same platform and making the very same plea, made it difficult indeed to withstand them for the reason that when contending with the preachers of the Campbellite persuasion, they seemed to be contending with themselves. Fortunately, however, when they fully announced their doctrine, it was seen to be so widely different from that held by the Christians, that no one could fail to see how wide they were of the truth, and it gave us the opportunity of showing wherein we differed, for it was a favorite saying of theirs, that we were so near alike, that it was a shame that we should be apart. I think I should here state some of the differences that have always existed between the followers of Campbell and the people called Christians. In doing this, I shall include the doctrinal differences, which are indeed very great.

First: Disciples do not permit women to preach, and would refuse to ordain a woman to the work of the ministry. The Christians do permit women to preach, and they ordain them too.

Second: Disciples do not receive into full church membership those who have not been immersed for baptism. The Christians do.

Third: The Disciples eat bread and drink wine, for the Lord's Supper every first day of the week. The Christians do not. When the people understood their teaching they said, "Why according to their doctrine, all who are not immersed, are eternally lost," and when they were forced to face this doctrine, there were a great many squirmers, but not one of them denied, that that was what they taught, and by making this bold announcement it was seen that they had a creed of the most rigid and unbending character and that their profession of taking the Bible as their rule of faith and practice simply meant their interpretation of it.

In the *Christian Baptist,* a publication of Elder Alexander Campbell, he advocated the following doctrine.

"The kingdom of heaven and of the Messiah was not set up till the day of Pentecost, and consequently Jesus was not a king while here on earth."

"The keys of the kingdom were particularly delivered to Peter, and to no other apostle; and Peter used them in opening the door of faith to the Jews at Pentecost, and to the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius."

Gospel order. (I give this in Mr. Campbell's own words.)

"Remission of sins is consequent on, or through immersion. No prayers, songs of praise, no acts of devotion in the new economy, are enjoined on the unbaptized. Immersion next to faith is *sine qui non,* without which nothing can be done acceptable to God," etc.

"No church is in gospel order which does not meet every first day of the week to break bread," etc.

"The Holy Spirit has no direct influence in converting or regenerating mankind now, but conversion, or the new birth, consists in believing the gospel, repenting of sin, and being immersed."

"The gifts of the Holy Spirit are taken away from the church, therefore the Spirit does not qualify nor send any man to preach the gospel in our day; but preachers are to study the Scriptures and preach what they learn, without looking for, or asking aid of the Holy Spirit."

Two brothers who were at the time members of the Christian Church, whose name was Swallow, came to my house and wanted the privilege of preaching the new doctrine, or the near way to heaven, so as to convince me of my wrong, and show me the error of my doctrine, and they did not think that it would take them very long to do it either. I told them that the Christians had left

other churches because of their tyranny, and that many thinking, and liberty-loving people, had come to the Christian Church because of its liberty, and truth and that now to go into a church that by its doctrine and practices would compel all men to believe as the preachers had said they should, was unreasonable, and I for one would never do it.

I said to them, that I would oppose them with all the power of my mind and strength. They said to me, that that was exactly what they wanted me to do. That when we got into a discussion, the people would come to hear, and they would be able to show me that they were right, and that there was no other way to be saved but as the Bible said, *faith, repentance, baptism,* or three steps to heaven. They told me that I might say anything I wanted to, and that they would answer anything I might say. It seemed that nothing would suit them, but for me to debate the question with them, which I finally consented to do, and the appointment was given out and the people came together in great numbers to hear the new and easy way to heaven.

They each took a turn at preaching, and held forth their doctrine of faith, repentance, and baptism, and emphasized very urgently, that religion was something to do, and not something to experience. They denied the presence and work of the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit of God in conversion.

When my time came to speak, I contended for an entire change of the whole man, and that regeneration was the result of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; or as the apostle puts it, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his abundant mercy he saves us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." The debate continued for three full days, at the close of which I told the people that it seemed nonsense to me to continue the discussion further, for I thought that the Campbellites had done their best, and that I knew I had done the best I could, and that for myself I was willing to leave it to the congregation to decide who of us had established our doctrine. I said to them, that I believed I had told the truth, as it was in Christ Jesus, and turning to the Campbellite preachers, I said, "I want to say to you, that I think you are wrong." "You make your houses too much like the muskrats do theirs: You know that they have to dive under water to get to them."

We agreed to leave the decision to the congregation, and when it was asked for its decision, the entire body arose and stood with me. I felt that the boys had been fairly beaten, and I could but feel a little sorry for them, even though I had the honors of a victory.

When the Christians separated from the Methodists, and Baptists, and Presbyterians, and took the Bible as their only rule of faith and conduct, and made Christian character their only test of fellowship, and started out to labor for the union of all believers in Christ, they met with long and severe persecutions, but they did not swerve from the original intention, and firmly and loyally stood for liberty and truth.

The Campbellites came preaching *union, union,* and claiming that they based their doctrine on the Bible, and that there was no essential difference between them and us. This as I have said, made great trouble for our ministers, for we believed and taught the same thing they did, except that we did not interpret the Bible, only each for himself, and hence could not endorse the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, except to the extent of allowing any one who really believed it, to enjoy and practice his belief undisturbed by others. So far as I have ever known, there has never been a so-called union between the Disciples and Christians except where the Christians adopted the Disciples' peculiar doctrines and practices; that is uniting with a body of believers who exclude from their membership all who do not believe exactly as they do. And if this was not done at the first it was

not long delayed, for to be a Disciple means to make immersion in water a test of fellowship. They took the name Disciples of Christ about 1836.

I promised to give the readers of this book the reasons that I could not join any one of the denominations, and I think that here would be as good a time as I shall likely have, to make that promise good.

When I was unable to read, and even could not tell one letter from another, I felt as I have elsewhere said, that I would give the world, did I possess it, to be able to read the Blessed Book for myself, and when I had learned enough, so that I could read it for myself, nothing pained me so much as to hear it misquoted, or wrongly read, and it especially hurt me, to hear ministers of the Truth preach things that I could not find in the Book, and insist upon calling it Bible doctrine. Whenever they preached about a triune God, or three Gods in one, and one God in three, and paid homage to the Holy Trinity, and pronounced the benediction to God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, one in three, and three in one, the God that had neither body nor parts, that bothered me so very much, that I could not sleep, or rest, neither day nor night.

The doctrine of the "Holy Trinity" I could not believe, for I could not find anything in the Bible

that even sounded like trinity, and certainly there was nothing there that sounded like "Triune God," and for me to believe that three persons, or intelligences, constituted one person, and made up the Eternal Godhead, was simply impossible. I made up my mind the first time I heard the doctrine of a "Triune God" that I could never believe the doctrine, nor go with the people who taught it. That all who read this book may have the articles of faith clear and correct as taught by the Methodists in my early life, I here give the articles of faith as copied from their discipline.

"There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, visible or invisible. And in unity with this Godhead, there are three persons, of one substance, power and eternity. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, or the Word—or Son of God who was made very man. The Son who is the Word, the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the God-head, and man-head, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us and to be a

sacrifice not only for original sin, and guilt, but for the actual sins of man.

"Christ did truly rise from the dead, and took again his body, with all things pertaining to man's nature, wherewith he ascended into Heaven and there sitteth, until he return to judge all men at the last day.

"The Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God!"

I will now proceed to give the texts of Scripture upon which I based my reasons for not accepting the doctrine as set forth in the above article.

Deut. 4:35-39. "Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him.

"Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.

"And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt.

"To drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day."

"Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else."

Deut. 6:4. "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord."

II Sam. 7:22. "Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears."

II Sam. 22:32. "For who is God, save the Lord? and who is a rock, save our God?"

I Kings 8:60. "That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else."

Psalms 86:10. "For thou are great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone."

Isaiah 43:10, 11, 12. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

"I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Saviour.

"I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God."

Isaiah 46:9. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me."

Joel 2:27. "And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed."

Zechariah 14:9. "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one."

Mark 12:29, 30, 31, 32. "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

"And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

"And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he."

I Cor. 8:4, 5, 6. "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many).

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

I feel it my duty having said so much about God, to give you my views of Jesus Christ. I do not believe that Jesus Christ is the very and eternal God, but that He is the Son of God, and I base my belief upon the following Scripture:

Matt. 11:27. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

Matt. 17:5. "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him."

Acts 8:37. "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

John 1:18. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

John 3:16, 17, 18-35. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

"The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."

John 8:35-36. "And the servant abideth not in the house forever: but the Son abideth ever.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Hebrew 5:8. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

Acts 3:13. "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go."

Romans 1:1, 2, 3, 4. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.

"(Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures.)

"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

Gal. 3:20. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one."

I Timothy 2:5. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

Hebrews 12:2. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 1:5. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father and he shall be to me a Son?"

Acts 7:56. "And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

John 3:13. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."

John 20:17. "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

Mark 16:19. "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God."

John 10:29. "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

John 14:28. "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."

Now if God is greater than Christ, or angels or men, Christ cannot be the eternal God, for God has no equal only as He gave to Christ the power to save all who came to the Father by Him.

Then, it seems to me that we have ample proof in the Scriptures that Christ prayed to the Father, and the Father answered Him.

John 11:41-42. "Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus

lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

"And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."

John 14:16. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."

Luke 22:42. "Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done."

Mark 14:35, 36. "And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

"And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt."

Matt. 26:39, 42, 44, 45. "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

"He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

"And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

"Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

Would Christ be talking and praying to Himself?

I have now given you a few of the texts out of the multitude that are found in the Bible. I could not believe that Christ was the second person in the "trinity." I believe that Christ was the Son of God in the highest sense possible, deriving His existence and nature from the Father, God, being the divine Son of God, before the creation of the world, or His incarnation in human nature. God called Him His Son, and only begotten Son, and Christ dwelt with the Father before the world was.

John 17:5. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

John 8:42. "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me."

John 3:17. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

John 6:62. "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?"

Now the above Scripture texts prove that Christ was with the Father, that he came forth from the Father, and went to the Father. That He was with the Father before the world was. That being the case, how can we believe that Christ was God, God was the Son, and that the Holy Spirit was either of them?

Where is the need of mystifying the word to mean inconceivable things when the plain meaning on the face of the Scriptures bring salvation to the mind as something that can be obtained without one being plunged into a mystery that tends to turn the convert from the plain path?

A son pre-supposes a father, and the human mind refuses to accept a theory that eliminates the father, when the son is a fact.

I Peter 1:18-20. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;

"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

Gal. 3:19-20. "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of trangressions, till the seed

should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hands of a mediator.

"Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one."

I Timothy 2:4, 5. "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

Now according to the Scriptures, one God and one mediator proves two beings. That is plain enough. To declare these beings as being one person would plunge the sanest mind into perplexity, unless it be taken on blind faith—and faith must be built on facts of some kind, so there is nothing left for me to say but this: "I do not believe in the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit being ONE PERSON, as the trinitarians claim them to be.

I further believe, that the will of God was made known to men, by means of divine inspiration, and that the Bible contains that divine revelation, and is therefore the perfect law of the Lord, and that it is sufficient to teach man what he should believe and practice, in order to be saved from his sins, and to be in harmony with his God; and I believe also, that man has a perfect right to exercise his judgment regarding the true import and meaning of the Bible. I believe there is one true God—perfect, and infinite, self existent, uncaused, independent of

all created beings, who created all things in the universe out of substances co-eternal with His personal existence.

With so many Bible proofs setting forth the fact of one God, I do not see how any one can believe that there is more than one, or that that one, is made up of Himself and two other Gods, who are not Gods, but the Son of God and the Spirit of God. That God of whom the Bible tells us, has parts, eyes, ears, hands, and feet. The heaven is His throne, and the earth His foot-stool, and that He is one, and not three.

If God revealed Himself to man in such a way that man could understand something of His nature and attributes, I do not understand how He could have made it more plain than He has that He is one. I can fully and easily understand the meaning of the word when in the Bible I read that God is one, but I cannot understand how that one can be made to mean three in one, or one in three, nor how that one God, is made up of three equally intelligent substances, or persons, and that these three make one. Nor can I understand how one God or substance and intelligence can mean something without body or parts which I am expected to love, worship and obey, and call Father. I cannot understand these complicated statements, and I never preached them, for to me they were not under-

standable either by those who preached them or those who heard them preached.

Because of these doctrines of the sects and my unwillingness to believe them, I was compelled to stand alone and not only stand alone but was bitterly denounced both in private and before the public as a heretic and unworthy to be heard or respected. I had stood alone and even without membership in any of the churches until at the last I found the Christian Church and found that I could believe and teach my conscientious convictions and be a member of this church and that no one would interfere with me, so long as I maintained a Christian Character. And now that I have lived my life and done my work I am thoroughly satisfied with what I have always believed, and had I my life to live over again, I would believe as I have believed and I would never bow to any creed, dogma or confession of faith of man's creating, but would as I have always done take the Bible, and aided by the Holy Spirit come to the conclusion of truth for myself. When I turned my back upon the world, and my face toward heaven, I took the Bible as my corner stone, and upon it as such I have ever stood, and upon this foundation of Christ and the apostles, I expect to stand until I am called up higher.

I have tried to state as intelligently as I am capable of doing, the reasons for not accepting the trinitarian doctrine. To me there is but one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ. One is my Father, and the other is my Elder Brother, the Saviour of men.

Neither do I believe in total depravity. I read the Bible carefully and prayerfully to learn the truth. It is from the Scriptures that I learn that by actual trangression, and disobedience we become sinners.

We are taught in the Holy Word that every one must give an account of himself, and not for any one else. Christ says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Heaven is represented to be a pure and holy place, and we have no reason to doubt it,—then all who dwell in it, must be pure and holy, and sinless. And Christ says, that children are like those sinless children,—"for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Thus one is driven to the conclusion that man is sinless, until by disobedience he becomes a transgressor of God's laws, thus becoming a sinner.

Following are some of the reasons why I cannot believe in total depravity.

Ezekiel 33:11-19. "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death

of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

"Therefore thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth.

"When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

"Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right;

"If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

"None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him; he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live."

Yet the children of thy people say, "The way of the Lord is not equal, but as for them, their way is not equal. When the righteous turneth from his

righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby."

Ezekiel 3:18, 19, 20, 21. "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

"Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.

"Again, When a righteous man doth turn from righteousness, and commit iniquity and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

"Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul."

Ezekiel 18:1, 2, 3, 4. "The word of the Lord came unto me again, saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel,

saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?

"As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

I John 3:4. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law."

Romans 4:5. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

In the above texts of Scripture, we find that he who transgresseth the law is a sinner, and by sinning he bringeth condemnation on himself only. But when man got himself in this condition, God was willing to save him, and sent His son into the world to save him from his sins, and bring man back to Himself.

Isaiah 53:6. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Then if man has gone astray, he has committed the blunder himself. And there was a time when he must have been in the fold, or at least safe. And the only time that it could have been, was when

he was a child, like the children that Christ blessed, when He said, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Christ said to the Jews: "Except ye repent and be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

Matt. 18:1, 2, 3, 4, 5. "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

"And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

"And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

Mark 10:13, 14, 15. "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

"But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Mark 10:16. "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

The Scripture that I have given you, and in others that you may read, proves to my mind conclusively, that man cannot be totally depraved, according to the Scripture.

Man by his own sins, his disobedience, and wrongdoing loses his own purity of heart and soul, and it must be a fact that he had purity, if he is able to lose it.

I think further comment useless, for it is very plain to me, and I cannot understand how any one can believe other than I have stated.

There were many who believed differently, and I could not join with them if I must preach total depravity, since to me, it did not exist. I could not accept the doctrines of their church, and could not preach what I did not believe to be true.

Here are the three reasons why I stood alone.

First: I could not believe that the three persons were one.

Second: I could not believe that the Son was the Father, and the Father the Son.

Third: I could not believe in total depravity, and I should have been standing alone yet, had I not found the Christian Church, or one similar to it in doctrine.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

PROSPECTING IN INDIANA.

Having been born and reared in the mountains of Kentucky, and having known nothing but frontier life, it was but natural that as Ohio settled up, I should long for a more definite frontier life than I found in Montgomery County, in 1835; and so in that year, I sold my farm, and proceeded to arrange for removal to a more distant western location. I felt also, that I had done all I could well do, in building up the cause of the Christians in Ohio, and that it was my duty to go to a new field.

In the fall of 1835, I left my family, and started westward to take a look at the country. In Indiana I traversed the counties of Cass, Pulaski, White and Carroll. After a due examination of the lands, and a careful investigation of the conditions, both social and religious, I finally decided to purchase government land in White County, near Tippecanoe, which I immediately proceeded to do. In my travels through Indiana, I found members of the Christian Church in several localities, and preached quite a number of times along the settlements of the Wabash River. I have reason to believe that the words I spoke had a good effect upon the people

who heard me. The preaching was done in Carroll and Cass Counties.

In going from White County to Laporte, when I went to enter my land, I stopped for a night at what appeared to me to be a very shabby looking cabin, but I could do no better, and it was either sleep in the cabin or in the woods, and the latter presented so many objectionable features, that I decided that come what might, I would stay in doors.

There were three very rough, ugly looking men, in the room, neither of whom impressed me as being trustworthy, but knowing that looks did not always indicate the character of men, I felt that I might have misjudged them, and that after all, my fears might be groundless.

I had in my possession, five hundred dollars, all in silver, and I felt that the money might have something to do with my impressions, for that amount of money in those days, was quite a fortune indeed. It was known that I had the money, and it was also known that Indiana had in it at that time, a large number of lawless men, who had emigrated thus far west, that they might the better rob and plunder the innocent and helpless pioneer, who, for the sake of a home for himself and family, braved the dangers of the then untrodden soil of this great western state.

As we sat talking late into the night, I took occasion to tell them, that I was a Kentuckian, and that I was raised in the mountains where men did not value their lives at all, and that the Kentuckians were at the best, a very rough and godless set of ruffians. I showed them that I had but one eye, and told them, that the other had been gouged out in a fist fight, which was the truth. About midnight the man of the house told me, that if I wanted to go to bed, I could sleep in the back room, but that one of the work hands would have to sleep with me, and as he spoke, he indicated with a wave of the hand which one of the men he meant. I felt sure that the man pointed out, was not a work hand but a common villain, and that I would not be safe in his company. Without showing the fright I felt, I said in a careless sort of way, "All right," and went to the room, and the man went with me. I put my money under my pillow, and lay down as though I felt that everything was right. I noticed, that there was a small window or rather a hole through which the light came in, right at the head of the bed. I had been in bed about two hours I should judge, when I heard them up and talking, but I pretended to be sound asleep.

The man who was supposed to be sleeping with me quietly raised himself in the bed, and just then I heard a noise at the window above my head, and

just then a hand was thrust in, and reached for my clothes. I grabbed at the man's hand, but he quickly withdrew it, and I missed my mark. But in pulling his hand away, he made quite a noise, at which my bedfellow turned over, and pretended to yawn, and called out, "Hey, there, you old jade. What are ye "tarin'" around that a-way fer." I sprang out of bed, and got my jack-knife and opened it, and as quickly as possible closed it, which made the click sound very much like the click of a pistol, and as I did so, I turned quietly to the man, and said to him, "lie down there; you can't fool old Kintuck." "If you fellows want a little fun, I am ready for you, and you can take that old cow that you were yelling at just now, and all the rest of the family." I kept snapping my jack-knife, and kept my eye on the man who had done what I told him. He lay down, and was in my judgment lying quite close to the bed. I felt myself master of the situation, for which I was glad, but I did not close my eyes in sleep during the remainder of the night, nor did my companion. As soon as daylight appeared, the man got up and left the room, but I waited until the sun was quite aways up before I ventured out. When I went out into the family room not a man was to be seen. The woman asked me if I wanted my breakfast, saying that the men had gone to the river to look after their fishnets.

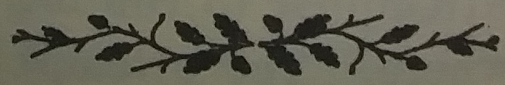
I told her, that I did not want any breakfast, and that I would get my horse and be off, for I supposed that the men had gone to get some more cows to help rob me. I told the woman that she had better hunt up the spades and have them ready, for if the men molested me, she would need them in burying her trash, for said I, "Ole Kintuck is not goin' to be fooled with much longer." I got my horse and rode away, feeling that I had run a narrow risk of losing my money, if not my life. When I had gone about eight miles, I stopped at a house and secured some breakfast for myself, and some provender for my horse. While eating, I told the folks who were strangers to me, how near I came to being robbed of my silver. They told me that the people where I stayed, were a bad lot, and that the community had been trying to get rid of them for a long time, and urged me to take some men with me, and return and arrest them. I could not take the time to do this, as I was anxious to enter my land, and return to Ohio. The truth of it is, I wanted to get rid of my money, but not by the robber method.

When I had entered my land, I returned, but the men who had attempted to rob me, were gone, and no one knew where. The attempt to rob me, had been made known, and the settlement having been aware of the character of these men, were preparing

for summary justice, when they took the alarm and left the country. After an absence of six weeks, during which time I had traveled eight hundred miles, and had experienced the usual hardships of pioneer life, I returned to Ohio, and to my great delight, found my family well, and that all had gone well with them. As elsewhere stated, I preached quite a number of times during this journey.

We at once began making preparations for moving, which was not so much of a task, for the reason that we had but little to move. During the winter of 1835 and 36 I traveled among the churches which I had organized, and those to which I had preached, giving them farewell addresses. When I thought of leaving my dear old friends, it made me sad, but when I remembered how the Lord had blessed my labors in Ohio, I was anxious to continue the work, in the then new state of Indiana.

While it was indeed sad to say good-bye, we all looked forward to a meeting in a better country, where parting would not be known.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

EMIGRATING TO INDIANA.

In June, 1836, I removed to White County, Indiana. My mother had received a stroke of palsy several years prior to this time, and was helpless; and though she desired to accompany us, and we desired to have it so, we were compelled to leave her in Ohio, for the time being. For a long time my mother had made her home with us, as my father had gone to Indiana to visit my sister, Hannah Louis, who lived at that time in Green County. My father was restless in his anxiety to see the frontier. He was born in the wilds of Kentucky, and was a hunter in spirit and in habit. He could not endure the advance of civilization, for he was a frontiersman in the truest sense of the word. The "betterments" of society, as he was wont to call them, had no charm for him. The bear, the wolf, the panther, and the rude outdoor life, had become parts of his enjoyment and companions, and as the rifle and the activities of the settlers had driven the game far away, and outdoor life as the hunters knew it, was not so common, my father hungered for the old time life and ways, and hoping in a measure to satisfy that hunger, he went on this

pilgrimage to Indiana, and while on this trip he took sick and died, and from that time on, my mother had made her home with me, and continued to do so until she died. I did not leave her in Ohio any longer than was absolutely necessary, and then prepared a large bed in a wagon for her, and took her to my new home in Indiana. She lived only about six weeks after we reached our home. She died in the triumphs of a living faith in Jesus Christ. She was born and reared in the midst of poverty and ignorance, had spent her life in the unbroken forests of the frontier, but she was a good woman, and had lived in peace with all her neighbors. She dated her conversion from the day I had gone to hunt the cows, and finding God so precious to my soul, ran home, and laying my head in her lap tearfully and joyfully told her how happy I was. She joined the Christian Church in the year 1820. She lived to be about 96 years of age, as nearly as could be determined from what she remembered, and other dates from which we reckoned.

On that day when I laid my head in my mother's lap and wept out the joy of my salvation, my father seeing such a marked change in me, said, "Abe, are you crazy?" My reply made a lasting impression upon his mind, and soon after we moved to Ohio, he joined the Methodist Church. My brother Wil-

liam, as elsewhere stated, had joined this church, but neither he, nor father, remained members of it very long. The whole family finally joined the Christian Church.

When I look over the years of my life, and think of the days when yet a mere boy in Kentucky, I preached the Gospel, and God abundantly blessed my labors, and then of seeing my entire family happily converted to God, and all members of the church I love so well, I am made to exclaim, "Thy ways, oh God, are past finding out!" Oh, how I thank His holy name. I praise Him for the fact and manner of my conversion. I thank Him for the light which that day shone upon me. I thank Him for pardoning my sins and making me an heir of heaven, even a joint heir with our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, I praise His holy name, His mercy endureth forever! "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints." "Holy Father, accept the heartfelt thanks of Thy poor servant, for Thy love to me."

I had lived on the same farm in Montgomery County, Ohio, for twenty years, and at the time of leaving it, had a family of eleven children, seven sons and four daughters. In 1838 we had another son born to us. With the help of my family I had cleared one hundred acres of land in Montgomery

County, and had made it ready for the plow, and now I left it, and became one of the first settlers that went as far west as the Tippecanoe River in Indiana. Here we found the Pottawattamie Indians in large numbers. We did not suffer for things to eat, as bears and raccoons abounded, and a skilled hunter could easily obtain them, and then, too, we had plenty of wild honey which was found in great quantities in hollow trees, and while the Baptist had locusts and wild honey, we could boast of bear meat and wild honey.

Here I at once began the improvement of my land, but allowed no secular obligation to interfere with my preaching. I traveled and preached in this new field, with the same zeal and devotion of my former life. My preaching circuits included the counties of Wabash, Tippecanoe, Kankakee, and the districts bordering the Yellowstone and Eel rivers, and their tributaries. Everywhere the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us" was heard. I organized, and assisted in organizing, a great number of churches. I, with other brethren in the ministry, helped to organize and build up the Tippecanoe and Eel River Conferences, and I want to bear testimony to the valuable service, and brotherly kindness of the men with whom I was permitted to labor; among whom I recall the names of McHenry, Adkins, Lowe, Atchison, Hiz, Shoemaker, Whitman

and Roberts. Here in my new field of labor I was as were all my brethren, sorely tried, and bitterly persecuted. We were scattered over a wide scope of country, and we met with great opposition everywhere. The severest trials came to us, from the Methodists and Campbellites, and though they were bitterly opposed to each other, they would join their forces in persecuting us. I here learned that union did not mean unity, for they were united in their efforts to down the Christians but were equally anxious to down each other. There lived at Burnettsville, White County, Indiana, a man by the name of James Hise, who was a devoted member of the Campbellite Church, and he seemed to take special pride in tormenting me, and doing all he could to thwart my plans and make abortive my purposes. He finally forced me to defend the doctrine of the Christian Church. The main point of the discussion was upon the doctrine of the new birth. I tried to show, and I think that I succeeded in so doing, that in order to be a new creature in Christ one must be born of the Spirit and adopted into the family of God. I tried to show the people that we were building upon the Bible doctrine, and were willing to give each one the right and privilege to interpret God's Word for himself, and that we as a people would unite with all Christians who would unite with us, in standing for liberty and

truth, and the putting down of sectarianism. When Hise came to speak in the discussion it was water! *water!* WATER! He stated clearly and definitely, that in order to get into the Kingdom, one must have faith, repent, and be baptized. While they cried union on the Bible, they interpreted that union to mean water baptism, and about the most conclusive argument he could adduce was, that we Campbellites say, that is the way to do it. I am sure that the debate did the Christian Church people much good, and that it was a great advantage to their cause. For some time after this, Hise and the Campbellites let me alone, as also they did the church.

The events above related occurred in the year 1838. In the fall of 1836, I had organized the Tippecanoe Church. The Christian ministers whose names I have mentioned, and myself held a number of camp meetings on the Wabash, Tippecanoe, Eel and Yellowstone rivers, which resulted in much good, for the settlements, and widely disseminated the truth as we believed it.

Ever since I had the dispute with Mr. Daugherty in Butler County, Ohio, in 1815, the ministers of the Methodist Church had been on my track, and at times worried me greatly. I had always tried to honestly, and faithfully, preach the truth, as I understood the Bible to contain it, and was willing

that all others should do likewise, but when they would not let me alone, and when they criticised my teaching, and assailed my church, I would defend the truth and the church to the best of my ability, for the Christian Church and its doctrines were dearer to me than life itself.

There was a Methodist, in White County, Indiana, who felt that we were heretics, and he called us all sorts of names. He gave out that we denied the divinity of Christ, and that we taught that He was but human, and that we had nothing more than a human sacrifice. He made out, that he himself was somebody, but that I was nothing but an ignorant bear hunter, and that I did not know any more than to hang on to a cow's tail while she swam across the creek. He also had much to say about me having but one eye, and took delight in telling that the other one had been gouged out in a fight.

I shall here relate how I came to have an eye gouged out. A while before I went to the meeting to fight Bowman, I had a quarrel with a man by the name of Riley, about dividing a bear. It was a custom among the bear hunters of Kentucky, when a bear was to be divided between two or more persons, to cut the bear into equal parts, and make as many piles of the meat as there were persons to receive it. Then a disinterested man would turn his back to the piles and another lay his hand upon a

pile and say, "Whose pile is this?" when the man standing with his back to the meat would call out the name of the one to whom that particular pile should go. On the occasion of our quarrel, we had a bear to divide, and Riley had been chosen to call out the names, and another man to touch the piles. When he intended to call the name of one of his friends, he would look back before doing so, to see what pile the hand was on. I caught him at this, and told him of it, and told the others that it was not fair play. Of course Riley got mad, called me some hard names, and then made a dash for me. In the fight I lost an eye, and he lost two fingers.

I stood the railings of this Methodist preacher, whom I have mentioned, as long as it seemed reasonable that I should, and then I went to him and told him that he had been misrepresenting me, and the people with whom I was identified, and that his falsifying must cease, for I would defend myself and my people against any more attacks. I asked him to name a time and place, where and when, we might meet, and I would prove to him that the Christians did not deny the divinity of Christ, and that I would also show him good Bible proof for believing as we did about Jesus Christ, and said very plainly to him, and as emphatically as I could, that I was able to prove to any intelligent audience that the Christian Church was right in her doctrine

and practice and looking straight into his face, said, "And I know enough, too, to hang on to a cow's tail, when that will save my life." He said he would be very glad indeed to debate the questions with me, and so we settled on the time and place, for holding the discussion. Ever since 1815 we had been persecuted by the Methodists, some going so far as to call us the *"trash trap."* They declared that we were "New Lights;" that we originated in the Cane Ridge Revival; that we had thrown away all discipline; had erected no standard of morals, or religion; that each man was to read the New Testament and put his own construction upon it; that we were always in a Babel of confusion; that some preached Arian, some Socinian, and some Universalist doctrine; that no one could tell what was *harped* or what was danced; that we had adopted immersion, the water god of all errorists; and that there was a constant controversy among us about the way to heaven, whether it was by water or dry land.

I had now made up my mind to stand no more, and that I would whip them if I could, and felt sure that if I presented God's Word in the right light and true spirit, I should succeed in doing it.

When the day came, and the large congregation had gotten quiet we went at it in earnest. My Methodist friend was very abusive, and spared

neither time nor strength to make me appear ignorant, and my people weak and worthless. He ranted quite a little, while defending trinitarianism. He asserted that man was totally depraved, that Jesus Christ was the very and eternal God, and tried to assign all who did not believe as he did, to an endless night of suffering. When the debate closed, nearly everybody was satisfied that for once the Methodists had gotten a good sound gospel thrashing, and from that time on that preacher let me alone, and all the others treated me respectfully.

The people began to see that it was the Word of God alone, and not man's interpretation of it, on which the Church of Christ must finally settle, build, and grow into a holy temple of the Lord. This was the year 1839.

I had a year later a farm of eighty acres under cultivation. This I sold to one Alexander Briggs, and purchased another farm adjoining it, and immediately began with all my might to improve it. This was the third farm I had owned and improved within thirty years.

This man Briggs, to whom I sold my farm, moved on to it, and at once began to sell whiskey to those who would buy it of him. I saw at once that I had a fight on my hands for I could not tolerate the idea of whiskey being sold in the neighborhood. There were two old men in the settlement who would get

drunk every time they could get whiskey. I was determined that if I could prevent the sale of whiskey, and save these old men the disgrace of being drunk, I would do it. One Sunday morning soon after Mr. Briggs had begun to sell whiskey, wife and I were talking the matter over, and while thus engaged, our son William came in. "Father," said William, "I should like to go over to Mr. Briggs' and talk this matter of selling whiskey over with him. I want to upset this liquor business in the neighborhood if it can be done." Said he, "I have been thinking about it for a long time, and I feel that some one should do something right away, and I guess I might as well be the one to do it. I think that I shall start right now, to doing what I know should be done." I said, "My son, perhaps you had better wait 'til Monday." "But, father," he replied, "isn't it just as good to kill the devil on Sunday as on any other day?" "Yes," I said, "I guess you are right about that." He went directly to see Briggs, and his mother and I knelt and prayed for him, and the success of his undertaking.

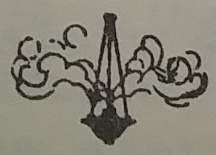
We were just ready to start to church, so after praying for him and his mission, we started, thinking that William would soon follow us, but he did not. Of course his not coming made us both anxious and uneasy, but we concluded that he was in the hands of the Lord, and all would be well, and

so we trusted and went on to the meeting. It was late when we returned from meeting, and William was at home when we arrived. I asked him why he had not come to the meeting, and laughingly, he looked up and said, "Why I have been drowning the devil." I was much surprised at this reply and looked at him in wonderment, not knowing what to say. He had never been known to drink, nor was he given to humor, but it looked now as though his head was a little turned. I asked him again, and a little severely, too, why he had not been to church, and again he smiled and said, "I have been drowning the devil." I told him to explain what he meant, lest we might think the devil had taken control of him. "Well," said he, "I went over and talked with Briggs about that whiskey selling. I told him that he was getting rich selling whiskey to his neighbors, and taking the money from them, which belonged to their wives and children, and that too when they were too drunk to know what they were doing. At first he got mad and swore that he did not take the women's money. I told him of some of the families that had but little clothing, and not much to eat, and that he had the money that should have been spent in buying food and clothes for these families. I said, men get drunk on the whiskey you draw from your barrels, and you have their money now jingling in your pockets. I also told him that

some of the men who got drunk on his whiskey went home and abused their families, and that I had seen them do it, and that if he had heard them cry as I had heard them, and had seen all the abuse and suffering I had seen, all of which had been caused by the whiskey he sold the men, that he would sell no more. I said, Mr. Briggs, I have come over to help you make vinegar out of your whiskey, or to knock the barrel heads in, and let the stuff run out! I said, Now sir, which would you rather have done? He said, he guessed he would rather have vinegar made out of the whiskey, than to have it poured out. For fear he might change his mind after I had gone, I told him I would help him drown the devil at once. We carried water from the creek, and filled up the barrels, and the vinegar is now being made." This act of my son wound up the whiskey business in that settlement.

I speak of this event, that all who read my life may know that I was always and ever opposed to the use and traffic of whiskey. Had my son not taken this matter up, I should certainly have done so myself, and would have done all I could to prevent the sale of the vile stuff to my neighbors, but thank God, it was done; and I thank God that I have such a noble son, who was always a helper in every good work.

One of the men, Jake Miles by name, who abused his family when drunk, sought to abuse my son, for the part he had taken in the matter, but for this he cared nothing, feeling that he had done right, and that the Lord had given him the victory.



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

VISITING ILLINOIS, IOWA AND OHIO

During the winter of 1842-3 in company with Cristall Scott, I went to Illinois, where I preached and bought furs. We arrived at the home of Elder Scott, Cristall Scott's father, about the first of December, 1842. Elder John Scott was one of the finest preachers I had ever met, and when he preached, as he often did, it was in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. He was a pioneer preacher, having been born in Virginia in 1788. He had lived and preached in Kentucky as early as 1815. He had also lived in Jennings County, Indiana, from whence he moved to Lawrence County, Illinois. From here he returned to Indiana, and then back to Illinois, settling in Fulton County, where he was living at the time above mentioned. He had organized several churches in Fulton County, and had established the Christian doctrine everywhere he preached. My plan was to give out several appointments for some one place, and let the people know that I would not only preach, but would buy their furs as well; I do not know which interested them most, the gospel or the sale of their furs. I let it be known everywhere that I had been a bear hunter in Kentucky,

but that I had given up hunting bear, and raccoon, and other fur animals, but that I would buy all the furs they had for sale, and preach the gospel free of charge. When they came to my meetings, I would not bargain for their furs or buy what they had brought until after I had preached, and in this way I held them for the service. After I had preached and closed the meeting, I would then give the hunters instruction in catching the otter, the mink, the coon, and other fur growing animals, and soon gained their confidence and respect, and purchased a large quantity of furs. I did not need to travel much since the people came to meeting, and supplied me with all the furs I cared to buy. We sold our purchase later in the year, but did not make much on it. In many of the meetings held during the winter, Brother Scott did most of the preaching, and he always interested and helped his congregations. My prayer is that the preaching of that time was seed sown upon good ground, which shall bring forth a hundred fold to His praise and glory.

During the years from 1843 to 1849 I traveled and labored for the most part on the Wabash, Eel, Tippecanoe and Yellowstone rivers, during which time many were converted and joined the church. In 1847 I returned to Ohio, and visited among my old friends, in my first Ohio field of labor. The changes of even these few years were many, and marked, but

I found many of the brethren and sisters with whom I had labored in those years, still alive, and still active in the service of their Lord. But some had fallen asleep, and their voices were hushed, no more to be heard in song and prayer, in testimony and praise, but I knew they had gone to a sorrowless, sinless, deathless country, where parting is never known, but where they will sing the song of redeeming love forever.

I met with a hearty welcome by those who remained of my old-time friends, and a warm reception from the children of those who had died. Everybody called me "Uncle Abe" and treated me with great respect, and cared for me in a very kind and gentle manner.

During the time I had lived in Ohio, I had preached in nearly all the school and private houses where service was accustomed to be held, and it did me much good, and made my soul happy to meet again these true and tried friends of other years. In many of the places I visited, I had preached the first sermon ever preached there. And then I recalled that it was here that I had been persecuted for righteousness' sake. It was here that I had been branded as a wolf in sheep's clothing, called a heretic, accused of denying the divinity of Christ; had been choked, whipped, and tobacco juice spit in my face, and otherwise publicly and privately abused. How

glad I was that God had at that time given me grace to endure all I did endure for His name's sake. It seemed that everybody wanted to see me, and bid me welcome, and the hand shakes were hearty old-fashioned ones I can assure you. During these scenes of welcome, the fountain of my heart would open, and tears of joy would run down my cheeks in streams, and I would praise the Lord for His goodness and mercy to me. I then realized that my labor had not been in vain in the Lord.

When my wife and I were laboring so hard in this settlement, when it was new, and a wilderness only, when we had to work hard to raise our family, when to preach meant to meet all the hardships and privations of pioneer life, the swimming of rivers, fighting wild beasts, and contending with tame ones (men),. walking long distances through snow or mud, it did not appear to us then that such changes would ever come, as I now found had come. Among the prominent members of the churches were the children of the men who had so bitterly persecuted me, and they treated me kindly, invited me to their homes, and cared for me tenderly when I went. When I realized the many changes for the better and having reason to believe that my humble labors had contributed somewhat to the improvement of the neighborhood, I thanked God for His grace, feeling that I had been more than repaid

for the trials, hardships, persecution and labors, of those early years.

I was away from home about eight weeks, when I returned, and found my family all well, and to say that I had enjoyed my visit to Ohio is telling the truth of my heart.

In 1849, I sold my farm on the Tippecanoe River in White County, Indiana, and a year later bought another in Cass County in the same state, located on the banks of Crooked Creek. I continued my preaching in the bounds of the Eel River and Tippecanoe Conferences. In 1852 I went to Illinois to attend the Spoon River Conference, which met that year in the city of Henry in Marshall County, and while there officiated at the ordination of my son William, and it did make my heart rejoice to know that I was the father of a son who after me would stand upon the walls of Zion, and proclaim the glad news to a lost and ruined world.

During the conference, and my stay in the neighborhood afterward, I preached several sermons which seemed to deeply impress the people. From here I made a journey up the river to Lasell in company with Elder Nickerson, who previously had a misunderstanding with Elder Matthew Gardner of Ohio, and I was called upon to try to effect a settlement between them. While in this part of Illinois I preached in several churches having good

liberty and large congregations. I was unexceptionally received with warmest appreciation. Elder Nickerson always introduced me as the bear hunter, and barefoot preacher. Several persons joined the churches during these meetings, and my preaching seemed to be well accepted.

From this part of Illinois, I went to Fulton County, to visit my son William and family. On my way, I preached in several churches, arriving at my son's the first of July, when I found all well. I learned that William had been preaching nearly every Sabbath with good effect, and had built up quite a large church near where he lived, in which undertaking he said he had been assisted by other brethren.

During my visit which lasted about three weeks, I had the pleasure of hearing my son preach several sermons, which pleased me very much. From here I retraced my steps to my home in Indiana, having been gone two full months. I preached that fall and winter to the churches near my home and have reason to believe that much good grew out of it. While at one of my appointments in White County, I was compelled to again gird on the armor and do battle for the truth, for here I found a wolf in sheep's clothing, doing great harm to the flock over which God had made me an overseer. A Universalist preacher, by the name of Clark had been preach-

ing the doctrine of universal salvation, and had led many to believe with him in the final redemption of all men. He was a talkative fellow, and had some clumsy play on words. He thought himself a mighty smart man, and was ready for debate in public or private, on all occasions. He assumed great boldness, and seemed to be of great consequence among his hood-winked disciples. He ridiculed the idea of a personal devil, who could, as he said, be everywhere present at one and the same time, tempting mankind to evil; and as for a future place of punishment called hell, there was no such place; and that the temptations of man arose from his fallen nature, and not from the devil, and the punishment that man would suffer for his evil doings he suffered in this life, and that these sufferings consisted in compunction of conscience, for his moral delinquencies, and in his bodily afflictions. He challenged me to a debate on the doctrine of universal salvation. I told him I did not believe in quarreling with preachers, but that I would not sit and listen to him preach people into hell, as I believed he had been doing, and not resent it to the best of my ability. So, said I, if nothing else will do you but a debate, set the time and fix the place and I will discuss the subject with you, or with any other man that preaches the same sort of doctrine, and by the help of the Lord will show you that you are wrong,

and that your teaching is leading souls to ruin. The time was set for the meeting by the Universalist preacher, and if ever I read the Scriptures carefully, and asked God earnestly to give me strength and wisdom, it was then, for I could not endure the thought of letting men and women go to hell blindfolded.

The day for our debate came, and with it a large concourse of people and we did debate in earnest, and if ever I had the power to make the truth clear and impressive it was during that two days' debate.

Whether I was the means of converting my opponent or not, I do not know, but one thing I do know, and that is, he left the country and never came back to preach Universalism in that neighborhood as long as I was connected with it.

During the years 1853 and 1854, I traveled in the interest of the American Bible Society. My territory included several counties in Indiana, and I sold and delivered Bibles, and distributed tracts in large numbers, preaching as I had opportunity, which was nearly every Sabbath. I was permitted while traveling for the Bible Society, to hold a great number of good meetings, which I have no doubt resulted in the conversion of many souls to God. In 1855 wife and I went to Illinois to visit our children who had married and settled in that state. That year the Spoon River Conference met

in Marshall County, and we attended it. While at this conference, I visited our oldest son, and I had the privilege of preaching several times to large congregations, and as far as seen to good effect. From here we went to Fulton County, Illinois, in company with our son William. I found that our cause was prospering very much under the labors of Buckner, Ross, Jones, and our son William. We tarried here for a month, during which time I held service and preached several times. We then started for home, and on the way I held several meetings, but there was not much interest in them, but I think that it was my fault, as I did not have the spirit of preach, as on former occasions.

The weather was cold and rainy, and the roads very muddy, and travel very difficult and unpleasant. After an absence of two months we found ourselves at our own dear home, and the children all well, for which we tried to be thankful. In 1856 we moved to Marshall County in order to keep house for our oldest son, who had had the misfortune to lose his wife. This year, the Spoon River Conference wanted me to travel as a conference evangelist, which I did, and had a very good time of it, for many were added to the church through my labors, but to God be all the praise. My wife was not wholly satisfied in the home of our son, though nothing but kindness was experienced, but rather because

she was in reality away from home, so that when my engagement terminated with the conference, we moved back to our home in Cass County, Indiana. In 1857 I sold the farm on which we lived, and bought another in the same neighborhood, and at once, as my custom was, began making improvements on it. I did very little traveling this year; wife and I were getting old, and the weight of years was settling down upon us, and I thought I had better preach closer home, and thus spend the remnant of our years together. I had very good success, for the Spirit of the Lord God was upon me, and He anointed me with power to preach His Word, and many were added to the church during that year. Early in the year 1859, the spirit of travel got hold of me again and I could not resist the desire to go forth and proclaim my Master's name and mission. Our son William had moved from Illinois to Iowa, and he wrote me from his new home of the great need there was of preachers in that state, and how few churches of the Christians he had found, and of the many places where the people had never heard of the church to which he belonged. Brother A. D. Kellison, of Winterset, Iowa, had also written me of the greatness of the field, and the opportunity there was in that country, and urged me to make them a visit, assuring me that many brethren joined him in the request for me to come, so I had to go,

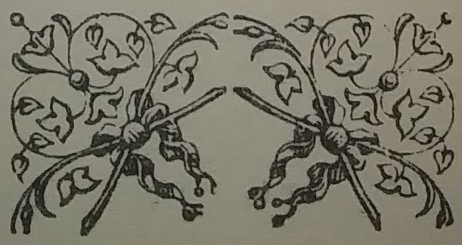
and accordingly on the first of November, 1859, I saddled my horse and started for Iowa, a distance of nearly seven hundred miles. I had quite a number of appointments on the way, which I tried to fill, and arrived at my son William's on the 10th of December. I found his family all well, but he himself had gone on a preaching tour. I preached to the church which he had organized, and which had been built up under his labors, and after a week's rest started out for Winterset, Iowa, a distance of seventy miles further, which place I reached in due time, and found Brother Kellison and William holding a meeting. We held meeting together, and at some of the places we had excellent good meetings too. The churches where we held meetings were greatly revived, and many were added to their membership, and such too as I hope shall be saved. The time came when William had to return to his home, but I continued to travel with Brother and Sister Kellison, and with them hold meetings, and many precious outpourings of the Spirit we had together that winter, for I remained with them all the winter. During the winter, I formed the acquaintance of many of the Iowa preachers, most of whom I found to be valiant workers in the Master's vineyard.

In March of 1860 I finished my work in the state, and bidding farewell to Brother and Sister Kellison,

and many others whom I had met and loved, I started for my home. At Pleasantville, Iowa, lived several of my old acquaintances from Ohio, and at their request I stopped there for a week, and held meetings for them, in which a great number of persons took an interest, and the doctrines of the Christians were proclaimed and believed. From Pleasantville I went again to my son's where I rested a few days, and then started on my homeward journey, which I concluded in reasonable time, without accident or incident worthy of mentioning. It took me seventeen days to make the trip from my son's, and that, too, of the hardest kind of travel, but which I made, for I was home-sick and anxious to see the loved ones again. My old wife was glad to see me, but not more glad to see me than I was to see her. I had been absent five months, during which time I had preached an average of four sermons a week, except for the time it took me to return home from my son's.

I am now an old man, and when I consider the almost insurmountable disadvantages and difficulties of the early ministry, and the hardships we pioneer preachers had to endure in spreading the Gospel in the wilderness of the west, and contrast our disabilities with the glorious human advantages that are now enjoyed on every hand, it does seem passing strange to me, that our modern preachers

cannot preach better than they do. Many nights in pioneer times, the preacher had to camp out without food or fire. Many of them could not conjugate a verb, or parse a sentence, and we murdered the King's English at every lick, but there was a divine unction attending our preaching, and thousands fell before the Sword of the Spirit, as we wielded it, and many glorious signs have followed our work, and will continue to follow it to the end of time.



CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE HARDEST TRIAL OF MY LIFE.

On the 24th day of October, 1868, my wife bid adieu to all that was earthly and crossed over the river to the better land, and this was the hardest trial of my life, and the year that followed was a year of the deepest sorrow through which I had ever passed. She took sick in May, and lingered until the date above mentioned, when she went away from me, and left me a lonely broken-hearted man, but the grace of God proved sufficient for me, even under this severe trial. She died in the triumphs of a living faith in the Son of God, and in hope of a better life and a sweeter experience than earth had ever afforded her. Her dying testimony was "That religion was good to live by, and was good to die by." She died as she had lived, in peace with her God, and all the world. She prayed that we might all meet her in heaven, and bidding us goodby, fell asleep in the Master's arms. She had been a good wife, a fond and loving mother, a faithful companion, and a zealous Christian.

Her home had always been a home for the traveling preacher, and for more than sixty years she had been a Christian, fifty-six of which, she had been

a member of the Christian Church. She was the mother of twelve children, and lived to see them all grown to manhood and womanhood. It seems to me now, as it did then, that in her death I lost all that was near and dear to my heart, and that on earth I had nothing to live for.

Our children were all married, and in homes of their own, and to me there was nothing left but the cause of Christ to detain me here on the earth. Oh, how lonely everything about the house and farm seemed to me, now that she was gone. She became my wife while in the freshness of youth, and the glory of young womanhood, and now that she is gone forever, all else seems to have gone with her. All here seems blank to me, but He who was the companion of my youth will not forsake me in time of old age, and deep sorrow.

I have learned that one though deprived of human society, need not be alone, that He who is above all, and better than all, will not leave me nor forsake me while I sorrow, and need His sympathy and love.

This faithful Companion on whom I now lean has never yet forsaken me, but has been with me in all my trials, and though left alone by the death of my faithful good wife, I have yet His strong arm upon which to lean and His Word to cheer and comfort me in the darkness. I want here to record that when many were false, and others fearful; when

envy rose up and jealousy was fierce; when floods and persecution threatened to overwhelm me; when earthly friends faltered, turned against me, and stood aloof in the conflict, this Friend stood by me, and now He will not forsake me.

"In every condition—in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth;
At home and abroad, on the land or the sea,
As thy days may demand shall thy strength ever be.

"Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismay'd,
I now am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

"When thro' the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

"E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
Impartial, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs in my bosom they still shall be borne.

"The soul that on Jesus hath lean'd for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

The winter following my wife's death I stayed in Cass County, Indiana, with my children, and in February of the following year, I went to Coffee County, Kansas, where my daughter who had married a man by the name of Martindale lived, and where for the time being I expected to make my home. I found this a fine country, and myself the first Christian minister to ever preach in Coffee County. In this new field, I began to sow the seed of the gospel, and to plant the doctrine of the Christians.

I organized two churches, beside the preaching I did where I did not organize. I did not meet with much opposition here, and had good success. The truth took deep root in the hearts of the people, and they gladly received the Word.

If my memory serves me rightly, there were about forty members in the first church I organized, and about twenty in the second. I preached in several places, and the Lord was with me. During the year 1871, my son William came to visit me, and we held a protracted meeting in which much good was done and eighteen joined the church. My old heart was made glad and I greatly rejoiced to hear my son preach the Gospel, and to witness his zeal in trying to lead sinners to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

During this meeting, I sat in the pulpit with my son, and grandson, all three of us being preachers in the Christian Church. This doctrine of the Christian Church I had preached all my life, and even before I knew there was such a church as the Christian. I preached it, because I knew it was the true doctrine, when yet a mere boy away back in the mountains of Kentucky, and at that time not knowing that another man on the face of the earth preached as I did.

I did not learn from a catechism, or a confession of faith, the things that I should preach, but what I learned was from the Bible, and the Bible alone, and being guided by the Holy Spirit, I was led into the truth, and I do not believe that any man who would go to the Bible for his statement of truth, and would be content to believe what the book would suggest to his mind at the time, as to the truth, would believe other than that which I have always believed and preached.

In May, 1875, the daughter with whom I had been living, died, and thanks be to His holy name, she died in the triumphs of a living faith, and the hope of immortality, through Jesus Christ. This was another severe trial to me, but like all the others through which I had been called to pass, I found Him a very present help in time of need. My stay with her had been very pleasant; she was so much

like her mother, that her death was indeed the reopening of the wound that had bled so sorely but a few years before. She had lived a lovely life, had been a faithful Christian, and led her children to God. It was her son Elijah, who with William, sat in the pulpit with me, making three generations of preachers in the pulpit at one time. After my daughter's death, I felt so disconsolate that I could not be induced to stay any longer in Kansas, and so in September, 1875, I went back to Cass County, Indiana, and made my home with my youngest brother, Ezekiel Snethen. I preached that fall and winter to some of the churches on Crooked Creek. I made one trip to the Eel River Conference. I preached at Marion, Morristown, Waverly and several other places. We had very good meetings that winter, though not much of the old-time revival spirit, yet I hope that our labors were not wholly in vain.

In the spring of 1876, I sold my farm in Cass County, Indiana, and after arranging my affairs, I started to North Dakota to visit my oldest son, who at that time lived at Fargo, that territory. When I arrived there, I found them all well, for which I was thankful.

I stopped on my way out at Elvira, Minnesota, and visited with my youngest daughter, Elvina Benham, and spent a month in her home. At the time of my visit to North Dakota, it was a wild and un-

settled country, but very good for stock raising, and wheat growing.

Here was another new field of labor for me, and though old and much worn, and at times quite feeble, I yet had the spirit of preach in me as much as ever. I felt that I must preach in this new country, and sow the seed of the Kingdom. I knew that my work was nearly done, that the sun of my life was rapidly setting, but while I was able to talk I wanted to point sinners to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

I was the first Christian preacher so far as I could find out, that had ever visited this part of the country, and here I preached for quite a while during the warm weather, the people seeming to take a great interest in my preaching, and became strongly attached to the doctrine of the Christians. Whenever and wherever I had an opportunity, I preached the gospel as best I could, and always and ever explained the doctrine of the church to which I belonged, and I have reason to believe that God honored the labors of even the humblest and most unworthy of all His servants, and I believe also that many believed the Word as preached and will be saved from their sins.

In December, 1876, I went from my son's home in North Dakota to that of my daughter's in Minnesota.

I have given as best I am able, a sketch of my life and labors, uninteresting they may be, but they have cost me many trials and hardships but the record of them I believe will do our cause some good and I desire that my son Elijah Snethen, shall publish the book, and if for any reason he shall not do so, then I wish my son William to publish it, and in case that neither of these shall be able to carry out my wish, then I hope that by some other means it may be given to the public.

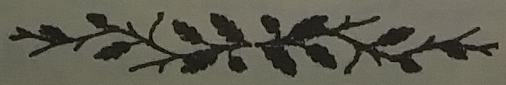
I believe that I have done my duty the best I could under the circumstances of my life, and am willing to meet the All-Wise Judge, and to Him give an account of my life and labors. It will not be forgotten that I was born and reared in the mountains of Kentucky, and at a time, too, when to hunt bear, raccoon, and deer and to fight each other, was the highest honors open to mankind in that region and that a young man never felt himself respected until he had lost an eye or a finger, or had in some other way been disfigured in a hand-to-hand fight with a neighbor.

I recall the first sermon I ever heard preached, and how the sermon tore me all to pieces, and how from that time on I strove to find peace with God and to be able to read His Word. I also recall the circumstances of my early life, and the unfavorable circumstances under which I began preaching, and

when I do, it seems a miracle to me, that I ever succeeded at all. I had no education, no school privileges, and no opportunity to converse with those who were educated, for there were none in the settlement. We were all ignorant alike, and no one dare say to his neighbor, I know more than you, for he didn't; and in addition to this state of distressing ignorance, we were all hardened sinners, and the country seemed to me even then to be God-forsaken and much more so did it seem to me when viewed in the light of the Gospel. When I had learned through that slow and toilsome process elsewhere related, to read my Bible, I did not feel that I was better than those who could not read, although some would hold me in sort of reverence because I could read. I read its sacred pages, in order to find the truth, and it did me much good, and made me glad, for in it I did find the truth as I believe it to be revealed in Christ Jesus my Lord. Before I could read for myself, it was not uncommon for me to hear that sprinkling, and pouring, and immersion, were all mentioned in the Bible as baptism, and that the Bible said there were infants in hell not a span long; and that it said we were all totally depraved, and that there were three equal Gods, all making one; but after I learned to read for myself, and the preachers found out that I could read, they were more careful about making such

statements. It was not an uncommon thing in my early life for men to undertake to preach who could not read, and all they knew about the Bible was what they heard others say, and it was not a wonder that they should get it badly mixed in their quotations. I prayed the Lord to give me a proper conception of His truth, and I believe with all my heart that He did, and if any man lacketh wisdom, and will pray for it, and follow the leadings of the Spirit, God will not withhold from him that for which he prayeth. I am now thankful that I took the course I did, and expect through the mercy of God to fight the good fight of faith, to the end of the journey, and at last reach the home of the soul in the land of eternal blessedness.

I frequently review the fields of my labor in Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Dakota, and other places, and find that in them all, the Lord abundantly blessed me, and was good and merciful to me, and by His grace I intend to go on until that time when He shall come to make up His jewels, when I feel sure He will give me a crown of rejoicing.



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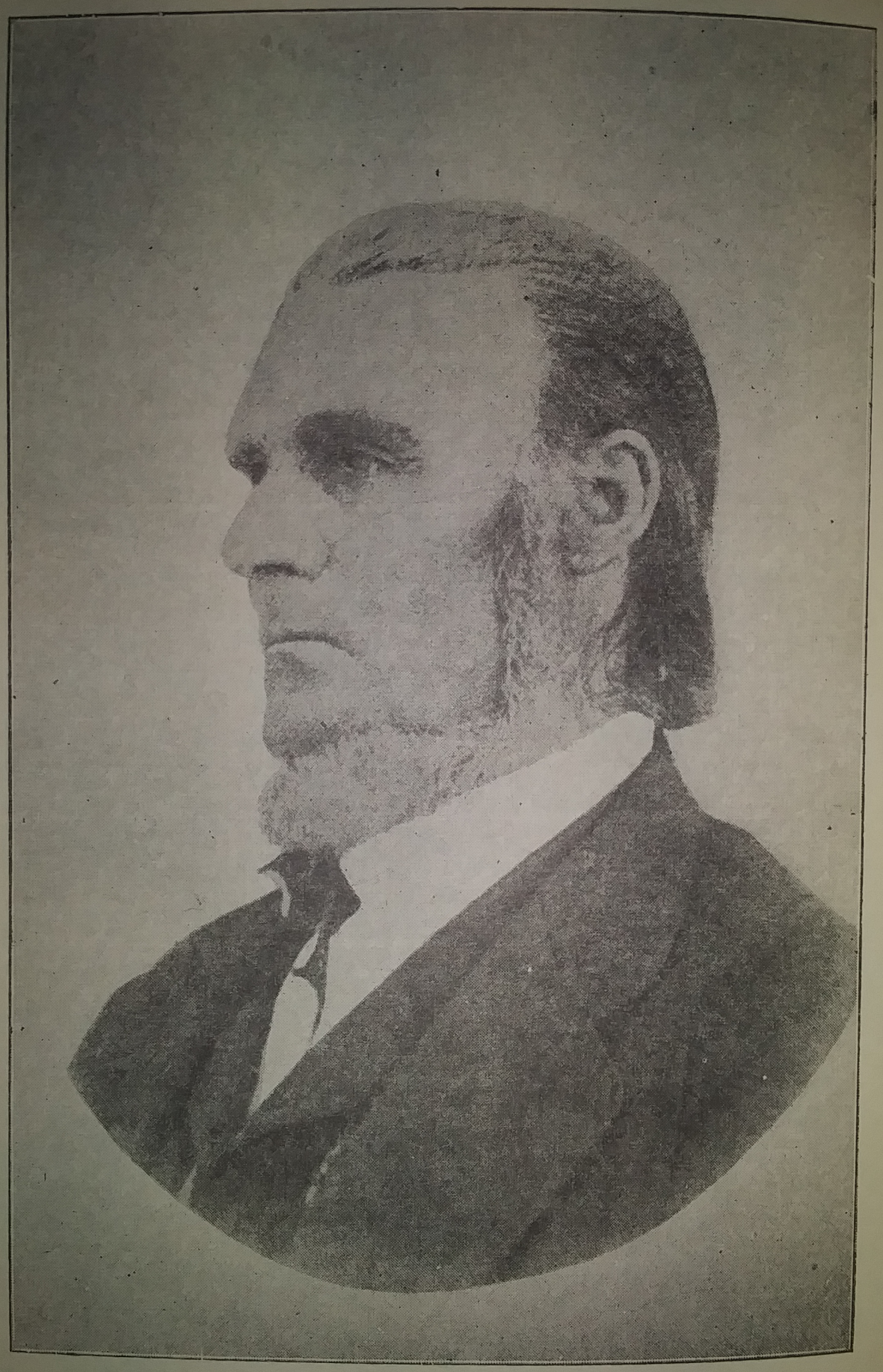


ABRAHAM SNETHEN

WHAT OTHERS SAY OF THE REVEREND ABRAHAM SNETHEN.

BY REV. A. D. KELLISON.

By request of Elder William Snethen, I will tell something of what I know of Abraham Snethen. For several years I was chosen by the Eel River and Tippecanoe conferences to aid him in the missionary work and thus had an opportunity of knowing the man of whom I would write.

In the years of 1848-9 we traveled together, and preached. I was young in the ministry, and Elder Snethen did most of the preaching. He was a man of God!—A workman that needed not to be ashamed. He seemed to have all of the qualities spoken of by the Apostle Paul, to Timothy. He was a profound reasoner, and seemed to have great knowledge of human nature, for he had perfect control over the minds of his hearers, so much so that he could make them laugh or cry at will.

He was a very careful man in what he said to any one, seeming to try to gauge their depth, and tendencies, before saying much.

He had charity for all, and malice toward none. His heart was full of love for perishing souls. As a neighbor he was respected and esteemed.

He was scrupulously honest, and was a man of unbending integrity.

As a preacher he was always punctual to his appointments. He was a self-made man in letters, and knew his Bible by heart.

In his knowledge of history, he was remarkable. He was a good councilor for young ministers, and was a true Father in the gospel.

He was a keen discerner of the sort of sinner a man was, and seldom failed in his judgment of men. As a pulpit orator he excelled almost any preacher of his time. He was logical in his sermons, making his subject plain to all. He was a man of strong faith in God. He preached with the power and energy of the Holy Ghost. Under his preaching, I have heard saints shouting "Glory to God!" and sinners crying: "What must we do to be saved?" at the same moment. He brought many souls into the light, where they could see Christ, and be saved.

He was a great peacemaker, in this none could compete with him.

I will relate an instance of this kind: We were at Crooked Creek holding meetings. The meeting had been going for several days, but it was a perfect drag. No good was being done at all. We began to

search for Achan, and we found him. Two of the leading men were fighting each other in law, over a difficulty of three or four years' standing, and the neighborhood was all stirred up over it, so Elder Snethen and I went to these two men. The Elder talked to them, and prayed with them, until he got their consent to arbitrate the matter, and thus settled it without lawyers, judge or jurors. As a result, a general reconciliation took place throughout the neighborhood, and the good work went on in earnest, and there were fifty souls made happy in the Lord, and added to the church.

The two men who had been lawing so long, got so full of the love of the Master, that they hugged each other.

Elder Snethen thought the Bible was an all-sufficient rule for the government of the church, and the power of Christ was a matter of faith with him, wherein there was not the least shadow of a doubt.

I have seen him when a few words from him would silence the rankest infidel. He had a masterly way of clinching an argument, with a sentence or two that left nothing for the infidel to do but keep silent.

He was a "Woman's Rights" man at a time when that subject was very unpopular, and a great temperance man, when no one praised him for it. He was also opposed to capital punishment.

The Elder was a very plain man in dress and living. In his preaching he could bring heaven and earth nearer together than any man I ever heard preach. He would carry his congregation to heaven, and feed them on heavenly manna—the bread of eternal life, and would seem to draw the waters of life fresh from the throne of God. Then he would seem to descend to the deepest regions of dark despair, and give a vivid picture of the awful consequences of living and dying without drinking of this fresh water, and eating of this heavenly bread. Many times as he would be preaching thus, have I seen strong men weep and tremble.

At the end of 1849 we closed our labors as missionaries, and I moved to Winterset, Iowa, and did not have the pleasure of laboring with him again until the winter of 1859-60.

We held meetings at that time with good results. He had the same longing desire for the salvation of souls as he had in earlier years, and he preached with the same power and energy as of yore.

In the year 1860 he left us and returned to his home in Indiana. He must have traveled over one thousand miles, and did it all on horseback too. I think there never was a man who could endure more hardships, swim more rivers, clear more land, preach more sermons than could Elder Snethen. Nor could any man stand more persecution and dis-

couragements than did he, especially during the early part of his ministry. Because of him thousands will sing around the throne of God. He is one who will not appear that day, and receive a starless crown. But he will come with many, who will be stars in his crown of rejoicing.

There are many in that day who will say of him: "I was lost, and he showed me the Way, the Truth and the Life."

"When the mists have risen above us, as the father knows his own.
Face to face with those that love us we shall know as we are known!
Far beyond the orient meadows, floats the golden fringe of day,
Heart to heart we bide the shadows 'til the mists have cleared away."

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

"Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,
Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve.
Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in our sheaves.

"Sowing in the sunshine, sowing in the shadows,
Fearing neither clouds nor winter's chilling breeze;
Bye and bye the harvest, and our labors ended,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves."

I can truly say that Brother Snethen sowed in the morning, and the evening, in sunshine and shadow, and some of them very dark shadows. He feared neither clouds nor storms, nor the coldest breeze of winter. And he had the promise of coming again, with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

BY ELDER H. FRY.

I think the first time I met Brother Abraham Snethen was at the Illinois Spoon River Christian Conference, which met in Henry, Marshall County, Illinois, June, 1854. At this conference his son William, was ordained. I well remember the prayer, eloquent and thrilling, that the father gave for the son.

The conference had appointed Elder Snethen to preach in its bounds that year. He preached very often in Henry County, and would stay with me over night many times. He could talk so well that I have sat for hours, enjoying the stories of his early life. He had many trials, but never seemed to regret having had them.

Many years have passed since that time, but I can still see the pleasant face of Elder Abraham Snethen, as he sat and talked to me with that smooth interesting voice, compelling attention, and inviting confidence.

He told me that he was keeping some notes of his life. I do not know what they were, but I will risk a few things, from memory, that he may have already told you.

While under conviction, he one day knelt down in a canebrake, and prayed and God spoke peace to his soul. He went home and told his mother. He had always loved his mother, but never so much he said as at that happy time, when his heart was full of the Spirit of love. One night his father talked with him on the subject, thus:

"Abe, there are two things that are left for you to do—or—well three things I may say. I will tell you what they are and will give you until after breakfast to-morrow morning to decide which one you will choose. You must leave off your religion,—leave home,—or take a whipping! You have always known my sentiments regarding this thing."

Abe did not sleep much that night. Early in the morning he slipped out of bed, and went up on the side of the mountain. He was worried and puzzled about what to do. He kneeled down and prayed, asking the Lord to direct him. Then he came to the conclusion that he would not give up his religion. There was one of the three things disposed of. No young fellow wants to take a whipping, and so the second of the three things was disposed of.

Abe went to the house, and washed his face, so the family would not know that he had been weeping. After the breakfast was over his father asked him saying: "Well, Abe, what conclusion have you come to as to the choice of those three propositions I mentioned last night?"

"Well, father, there is room enough in the world for both of us, so I guess I had better leave home."

"Well I have a notion to give you a d——d good whipping to remember me by, anyway," his father said. For he was surprised that Abe thought more of his religion than he did of his home.

"I would rather you would not do that, for as we part we will remember each other," Abe answered him.

So he left home with only a pair of linen pants and an over shirt that his mother had woven.

At this time he was only nineteen years old, and was cast out in the world, with no education, and could only read a little in his Bible. He worked out, and went to every meeting that he could, no difference where or what it was. The first time he ever attempted to preach, was at a Methodist meeting. The preacher did not appear when the time came, so the man who was in charge said: "It is too late now for us to hope the preacher will come, so we will not wait any longer. There will be no meeting."

After they had all gotten out of doors, Abe went to the leader and said: "If these people will all go back into the house, I will preach to them."

"Here is a boy who says that he will preach to you," the leader said.

"All right," they said, and refilled the house. He told me his text, but I have forgotten it, but he cried, and so did the whole congregation. A year after this he preached in his own neighborhood. His father came in, and all the chairs were filled. Abe took his own chair down and gave it to his father, who sat down with his back to the pulpit.

He visited his mother while on this trip. The young folks had a play party, and invited him to it. He went but would not play, but promised to sing them a song after they got through. They soon got through playing, as they had a great curiosity to know what he would sing. He was a good singer, so when all were silent, he sang:

> "Come all ye people of every nation,
> Come listen awhile, and to you I will tell
> How I was first called to seek for salvation
> In Jesus my Lord, who redeemed me from hell."

The last time that he was at my house, was when he was on his way to see his son William, in Iowa. His home was in Logansport, Indiana, at this time. I think that it was in the year 1860 or 61.

He told me on his visit of his trip back to "old Kintuck," as he usually called his native state.

It was during the political excitement, when Lincoln and Douglas were candidates for president. He assured me that he had never begged, but on his trip to "Kintuck" he was five hundred miles from home, and had only twenty-five cents left.

"I didn't know what else to do, so I took Christ's plan, and began to inquire who was worthy," said he, with a twinkle in his eye.

So he rode along until he came to a house. A young lady was sweeping the porch. "Are there any Christians in this valley?" he asked her.

She thought for awhile then said:

"There is an old Baptist deacon living just over there, and if there ever was a good man, he is one."

He rode over and explained to the deacon who he was. The deacon had just been writing a letter to the association that was to convene the next day. He was to attend, and asked the Elder to accompany him. As they were on their way the next morning, the Elder said:

"I would like to preach in this neighborhood Monday as we come back," for he did not expect to stay longer than that. As they were talking they met a young man coming toward them, with a large book under his arm. The Deacon told the young man

that the Elder wanted to preach in the neighborhood Monday night.

"Well," said the young man. "He can preach at my house, right up there and I will give out the appointment." The young man, as he afterward learned, was a slaveholder.

At the Association he preached twice, and as they returned home, and drew near the house where he was to preach, the Baptist Deacon turned toward home and said: "That man," meaning the man at whose house the Elder was to preach, "is the worst man in the valley."

The Elder rode on, and when he came near the house he found the yard full of people, black and white. When he got to the gate, the young man met him, and told a negro to take "the preacher's horse and care for it;" and then he took the Elder by the hand and led him up the walk, parting the crowd so as to pass. He preached three nights, had a good time, and the third night he dismissed the meeting. The next morning his horse was brought around to the front gate in good trim. He bade the young man good-bye, and started for the gate.

"Hold on old man," he called. Then going toward the gate, with both hands in his pocket, he added: "I thought that you were old, and a good ways from home, and you might be a little short of means."

The Elder said that he had been a little short of means all along, but had not been allowed to suffer. The young man took both hands out of his pockets, and they were full of silver, and he said:

"Take that, it is yours in welcome."

When the Elder had thanked the man, and had got far on his way, he counted the money, and found it to be twenty-one dollars.

I heard Elder Snethen say once, that he had preached two good farms away, and if he had his life to live over, he would do the same thing again.

I hope that the life of Elder Snethen will soon be in print, and that the Lord may raise up more men like him is my sincere prayer.

BY REV. JOHN LAMB.

I was acquainted with Elder Abraham Snethen, and heard him preach several times, shortly after I began to preach in Howard, Indiana.

I am sure that I never heard a better reasoner. His natural abilities were good, but his advantages in literature were limited. He was a self-made man; good scriptorian. He was always full of spirit and power.

On one occasion he was traveling on horseback, when he came near a town. It occurred to him to ask the first person he met if there were any Chris-

tians in town. As he was riding by a house, a woman stepped out and he asked her the question, if there were any Christians in that place. "Well, I don't know, really," she said, "but if there is one it must be the man who lives just over there. I often see him sitting on his front porch, reading his Bible." When the Elder rode up to the house designated, he found the man to be a Baptist preacher.

"Do you preach here?" asked the Elder.

"No, I do not, there is no house to preach in," answered the preacher, smiling.

"I would like to preach here," said the Elder.

"There are no houses here fit to preach in. But I will tell you what you can do. I have an appointment about eight miles in the country, for to-morrow and you can preach there."

"Well, I will be glad to go with you, but while you are getting ready, I will see if I can get a house to preach in here." So he went all around and asked at every house, and was refused, until he came to the largest house in town. Here a rich man lived, who was thought to be very wicked.

"May I preach in your house, sir?" he asked the man of the house.

"Well, if you want to *preach* you can preach in my house. But I don't believe that you can preach at all. But you may try, and if you don't preach, we will make you."

The next day the Elder went with the Baptist minister to his appointment and preached. He got back the third day, and found the rich man preparing seats, and notifying the people.

A large congregation turned out just for the novelty of it, and to hear what the shabby little preacher would say.

They did not need to make him preach. The Lord helped him. The infidel's wife was converted. And the man himself was anxious for the Elder to stay, and continue preaching. He said to the Elder:

"If you had been here fifteen years ago, I would have been a consistent Christian now! But it is too late. I am a confirmed infidel."

"Oh, I think not."

"Yes, I am. But for the sake of my wife and family, I want you to stay and preach."

But the Elder had another appointment, so could not stay longer than the next day. When he started away, the man followed him for quite a distance and seemed to have something on his mind, and finally said:

"Would it be an insult if I asked you if you need any money?"

"Oh, no indeed. I have not a cent of money, but I reckon the Lord will provide for me as He always has."

"Wait a minute," and the man ran back, soon returning with a hand full of gold. "Take this! you are perfectly welcome," and he did not even count the money.

I have often thought that the Lord put it into the hearts of wicked men to protect the righteous.

When he first began to preach, the Elder was very poor. He did not get much from the churches. He worked very hard for his living, and preached for the good of the cause.

He went into a grocery store one day to sell some coon skins. He needed the money with which to pay his taxes. A grocery store those days, was a place where they sold whiskey, as well as things to eat. It was no disgrace to go into such places, yet men sometimes got drunk there. On this occasion one man was so drunk that he did not care for God, himself, nor the devil. When the Elder went in with the coon skins, this fellow began to abuse him.

"Don't you preach, Snethen?" asked the fellow sneeringly.

"I try, sometimes," answered Elder Snethen in his mild way.

"Well, you ought to have your head broke, and if you don't leave I will break it," shouted the drunken man, and then began to abuse him.

The grocer did not buy the skins, but a drinking man who stood near said to him:

"Say, Snethen, how much are your taxes?—how much do you want for your skins?"

"I only want one dollar," said the Elder. The man gave it to him, and said: "There it is, you may go."

Then, after the Elder had gone, the man turned to the drunken fellow and gave him what he termed a "drubbing," saying:

"There! I'll show you how to abuse civil folks!"

It seemed that Elder Snethen had such a way of addressing himself to the understanding of his hearers, that he could take them up to the highest point of ecstasy, and then bring them down to earth with his powerful reasoning. Perhaps the secret of his power was that he did not preach himself—but the Lord Jesus Christ.

His hearers would often weep, or shout "glory" when they had no intention of doing anything of the kind.

One day at Winterset, Iowa, Elder Snethen said:

"Brother Serber, tell me the wickedest place you know of."

Brother Serber mentioned a place about six miles from Winterset and said:

"I believe that place is about as wicked as a place can well be."

"I would like to preach there," said the Elder.

"If you want to go, I will get you an appointment."

"I will surely go, if I may."

The time appointed came, and Brother Snethen preached in the schoolhouse. The man who was called the ring leader of the rowdies was at the meeting and something in the sermon of the Elder so touched this man that he wept. A man from the adjoining neighborhood twitted him about it.

"You shed tears at that meeting, didn't you?"

"Yes, I did! And you go and hear him, and you will shed tears, too."

"No! I would not do that," answered the man, with an oath.

"Yes, you would, and you could not help it."

"Well, I won't go over, but if he will preach at our schoolhouse, I will be there to hear him, and he won't make me shed any tears, either."

Elder Snethen made it a point to preach at that schoolhouse, and the very first sermon, the man who was so sure that he would not weep, cried softly. And at the second sermon he cried aloud, and afterward those two ring-leaders were converted and a church was organized, and they became leaders in it.

At another time Brother Snethen was traveling somewhere in Kentucky, and stopped at a tavern, to stay all night. The landlord said that they were

going to have a ball, but it would be a civil one. Awhile after dark they began to dance.

The landlady came up to Elder Snethen and asked him to dance with her. He excused himself very politely, and she found another partner. The company danced until they were tired out, and then stopped and sang songs. After awhile the landlady asked him:

"Stranger, can you sing? Would you sing for the company?"

"Yes, I can sing." He sang these words:

"The day is past, and gone, the evening shades appear.
Oh may we all remember well, the night of death draws near.
Lord keep us safe this night, secure from all our fears,
In mercy guard us while we sleep, till morning light appears.

"And if we early rise, and view the unwearied sun,
May we set out to win the prize, and after glory run.
And when our days are past, and we from time removed,
Oh may we in thy bosom rest, the bosom of thy love."

His singing was so different from theirs that profound silence ensued. When he was through singing, he felt like praying, so he said to the landlord:

"If you do not object, I would like to pray."

"That is all right," the landlord and his wife both assured him. He knelt down and prayed, and the

landlady was converted while he was praying. Then they asked him to stay, and preach for them.

He preached a few sermons; as a result, about twenty persons were converted. After this they were more than ever anxious to have him stay. His arrangements were such that he must go on. But he told them that he would get some one else to preach for them, if they would tell him of some one that he could send.

They told of a Baptist preacher about twenty miles from there. So he went by that place and told the preacher what they wanted. The minister promised to go and preach for them.

A year from that time, Elder Snethen was passing that way, and stopped again, and he found a large meeting house had been built, through the effects of a prayer in the ballroom.

Elder Snethen was not a sectarian. He owned every man as a brother in Christ if they were Christian. That men should seek heaven, and shun hell, was his delight.

To imitate the Master, in precept and example, was a sufficient rule of faith and practice for him.

A place where no one was allowed to preach, a place where they swore no man should preach—was the very place that he was always sure to go.

At a place in the woods, a hard set of men had bound themselves by oath that no one should ever

preach at that place, and live to tell it. When Brother Snethen heard of this place, he sought an opportunity to preach there. These men were hunters, and killed bear, and other wild animals, and would toss the hides up into the loft to dry. There were at least forty of these men who had taken the oath, about the preaching.

His opportunity came. He was acquainted with one of these men. Meeting him one day, he said: "Won't you get those friends of yours to let me preach at your place?"

"I cannot do it. The fellows would kill me if I should undertake such a thing," he said.

But the Elder insisted, until the man said he would see if he could talk some of them over, which he did, and five or six were won over to help him. They appointed a time and place for him to come and preach. When the Elder arrived at the place they were all there, and all of them had guns, excepting the men who had made the appointment for him.

They had other things than guns—swords, corn cutters, and all sorts of dangerous weapons.

The friends of the Elder tried to get the men to listen, and be peaceful but they refused, swearing that he should not preach. Finally his friends swore he should preach. But the other side swore that he should not. Then as they were about to

fight, Elder Snethen saw that now was his time. He jumped upon a bench and cried loudly: "Hold! I only ask ten minutes to talk," and then began, and when the ten minutes were up, he said: "My ten minutes are gone, and I ask for ten minutes tomorrow—may I have them?" and he got down from the bench and left.

The next day, as before, they came armed. When his ten minutes were gone he asked for fifteen minutes more. Some said, "all right" and he went on. When the fifteen minutes were up, he had gained the victory. They had stacked their arms. He had the courage to ask to preach the next day. They told him that he might preach as long as he cared to preach. When they came out the next day, they had left their weapons at home.

So the battle was fought—and the victory won. And before he had finished his sermon they were contrite enough, and were crying for mercy.

Eighty converts was the result of this meeting. These men were intelligent, but unlearned. They told their experience just as such men naturally would. They would say: "He made me think that I was killed, and that I was up in the loft!" "Despise not the day of small things, for God has chosen the weak things of this world, to confound the mighty." "Oh God, help us to trust thee."

These rough men, while talking, were so moved that the tears rolled down their cheeks. Those souls were surely snatched from the burning.

In the year 1850, Elder Snethen preached in Rushville, Indiana, about two miles from our house, and I went to hear him preach. The meeting was held in brother Henry Williams' house. Brother Snethen found out that I had been trying to preach. After meeting was over he took my hand, and said:

"Brother Lamb, it does me good, to see young ministers out in the vineyard of the Lord trying to labor for Him. He talked to me as a kind father might and it did me good. Oh had I but given my whole time to study—and to preaching—then the good I might have done for the Master.

Elder Snethen was holding a meeting in the northern part of Indiana. During the progress of the meeting, a man in the vicinity, undertook to run a ball at the same time, in opposition to the meeting, declaring that he could hold out as long as the meeting folks did, but after a week or so, their limbs grew tired. They were compelled to stop and rest. The family, father and mother and daughter, carried on the ball. After they closed the ball, the daughter wanted some place to go, so she came to the meeting. After awhile she became interested in her own welfare, and one night she was converted.

She went home and persuaded her mother, and father to go and hear "that man" preach.

They were opposed to anything like preaching, but they loved their daughter so well, that they went to the meeting, at her earnest entreaty. This man had been a great sinner, and had not been honest. The Spirit of God got hold of him and he was soundly converted and made up his mind that he must make restitution.

He immediately went to an old Quaker, who lived about four miles away and said to him: "I want to pay you for four bushels of buckwheat."

"I never sold you any buckwheat that I know of."

"I know you did not—I stole it from your barn!" and he paid him for the buckwheat. Then he said to himself: "Now there is that old mare that I drowned. It comes up before me. She was worth about seventy-five dollars. I must pay for her."

It was winter time, but he had not all of his corn gathered yet. This old mare that he was thinking about, had been a little breachy, and had been getting into his cornfield. So he cut a hole in the ice, at the end of the cornfield, and drove the old mare into it, and allowed her to drown. He now went to the owner of the mare and said:

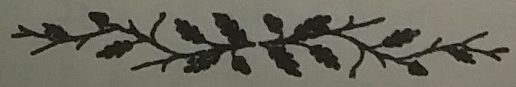
"How much was that old mare of yours worth, that was found dead in the creek last winter.

"She was worth about seventy-five dollars," was the reply. He then told the neighbor all about how she came to be drowned and then offered the man seventy-five dollars. The neighbor said:

"Well as it is—as it is—you may pay me one-half and we will call it square!"

"No! no!" said the earnest man. "I will pay you all that you say she was worth!" and he did.

But there was still a great crime hanging over him. He had stolen a horse and he was writing everywhere to try and find the one from whom he had stolen it. The owner had moved away, and no one seemed to know where. Elder Snethen told me that he did not know whether the man ever found the owner of the stolen horse or not.



ADDENDUM

A CLOSING WORD

But little is known of the last years of Elder Snethen. He did not attach importance to the events of his life, and no records other than the meagre notes from which the story of his life has been prepared, were at the command of the revisor. It is known that early in the spring of 1876, he went to North Dakota where he remained until December of the same year, when he returned to the home of his youngest daughter, Mrs. Frederick Benham, near Sleepy Eye, Minnesota. Here on the first day of January, 1877, this old pilgrim, this devoted man of God, laid aside his armor and received his crown from the hand of Him whom he had served so faithfully and so well. The funeral services were conducted by Elder William Sweet who preached from a text which had been chosen by Elder Snethen—1 Thessalonians 4:13-14: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

He was the father of twelve children, six of whom were living at the time of his death, and I am informed that three are living at this date, May 14, 1909.

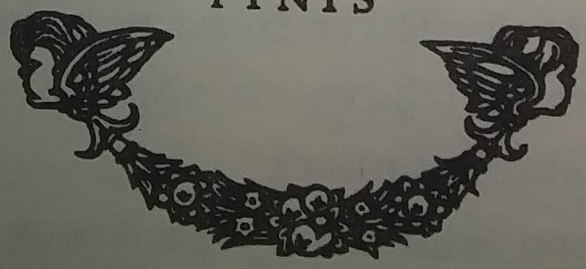
In his personal appearance the Elder was said to be disappointing. He, like Zaccheus, was small of stature, but was compactly built and capable of great physical endurance. His size and appearance as a public speaker were much against him, but his oratory was so superior that his congregations soon forgot the man in the interest of his message, and the manner in which he presented it. He possessed a philosophical mind, a clear poetical imagination, a musical voice, a cheerful disposition, a keen appreciation of the humorous, a character beyond reproach, a conscience void of offense and a manhood that all men were compelled to respect.

As a pioneer preacher he had but few equals, and no superiors unless it was in scholastic training, and for the lack of this he made up by native ability and good hard sense. It is said that he was a natural orator, but as simple as a child, and that he could hold his congregations as long as he cared to speak. He never allowed himself to disappoint his congregations. No matter what the distance, the obstructions or the dangers, he would manage to arrive on time.

From the Lives of Deceased Ministers by the Rev. E. W. Humphrey, I copy the following, which will give the reader one reason at least why Elder Snethen did not disappoint his congregations. "One reason he gave for being thus valiant in his course was, that when a young man, at one time, he and another young man and two ladies, went to a dance across the Kentucky River in the days of his folly. When they came to the stream, they found it full up to the banks, with a very strong current, the mush ice covering the entire surface and the canoe on the other side. After consulting awhile, Snethen proposed that the ladies should turn aside from sight and he would get the canoe. He stripped himself, swam across the angry stream, brought the canoe back in safety, took his companions over, and enjoyed the dance. Years after that, when he came to the Wabash or other streams in similar condition, on his way to an appointment, if, for a moment, he thought of turning back, the remembrance of his energy to serve the devil, as he expressed it, came up, and the question arose: "Did I swim the Kentucky River to go to a dance, and shall I turn back when I have an appointment to preach Christ to perishing sinners?"

Elder Snethen was a very generous hearted man, and his home was the "Wayfarer's Inn" no matter at what time or under what circumstances the trav-

eler might arrive. When there would be meeting near his home it was nothing uncommon for him to provide meals for all who attended, and he and his wife and children took great pleasure in so doing. It is related that on one occasion when he had taken almost the entire congregation to his home for dinner, that he found himself without meat, and that for a time he was somewhat embarrassed, but he said he would see what the Lord had in store for them, and taking his gun he went out into the forest. He did not go far until two fine deer came up close to him, as much as to say, "Here we are, rise, slay and eat." He killed them both, thus furnishing meat for his company, and was by the incident deeply impressed with the goodness of the Lord. He lived the life of the righteous and he died in peace with all mankind, being full of years and honor.

J. F. B.

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